

there is no harm generally in exchanging knowledge at the international level, whether it is with the Italians or the Germans or others and it always pays us to exchange knowledge of technology and the chemical processes which are useful to us not only in the matter of descaling, but also in other matters.

DR. RAJAT KUMAR CHAKRABARTI: I wanted to know who manufactured these tubes and the materials out of which they are made.

SHRI C. P. MAJHI: Sir, I am sorry I do not have the information with me now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

#### Railway canteen on long-distance trains

\*273. SHRI K. N. DHULAP†:  
SHRI GULABRAO PATIL:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the restaurant cars run on long-distance trains are managed by the Railway Catering Service;

(b) if so, what are the terms and conditions on which the waiters are employed for these restaurant cars;

(c) whether it is also a fact that these waiters serve the passengers on commission basis only;

(d) if so, what is the percentage of the commission allowed to them and what other facilities are being given to them; and

(e) whether any alternative arrangement is under contemplation in this regard?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SAR DAR BUTA SINGH): (a) to (e) A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

#### Statement

(a) Catering on the long-distance trains is done both by the Contractors and by the Railways themselves departmentally.

(b) and (c) There are three categories of waiters or bearers viz salaried bearers, Pay-cum-Commission bearers and purely commission bearers. The first two categories of bearers are railway employees, while the commission bearers are engaged as self-employed persons by the railways for vending eatables and other items on behalf of the departmental catering units on payment of commission only.

(d) The rates of commission which vary on different zonal railways, are as under:—

Railway	Rate of Commission			Remarks
	Meals	A-la-carte items	Cold drinks	
1. Northern . . . . .	..	..	..	No dining car is managed departmentally.
2. North Eastern . . . . .	12%	12%	10%	
3. Northeast Frontier . . . . .	..	..	..	Do.
4. Central . . . . .	12%	6%	6%	
5. Southern . . . . .	10%	10%	10%	
6. Eastern . . . . .	10%	10%	10%	
7. South Central . . . . .	11%	11%	6%	
8. South Eastern . . . . .	15%	15%	10%	
9. Western . . . . .	10%	10%	8% to 10%	

The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri K. N. Dhulap.

Since the commission bearers are not railway employees they are not entitled to the facilities enjoyed by railway employees. However, they are given free treatment as out-door patients in Railway Hospitals.

(e) No, Sir.

**SHRI KRISHNARAO NARAYAN DHULAP:** Sir, there are three types of bearers: salaried bearers, pay-cum-commission bearers, and purely commission bearers. What is the number of each of these categories? Secondly, there is difference in the rates of commission. For example, on the Central Railway, for meals it is 12 per cent, for other articles it is 6 per cent, and for cold drinks it is 6 per cent. On the South Eastern Railway, for meals it is 16 per cent, for other articles 15 per cent and for cold drinks it is 10 per cent. Why is this difference there?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** For giving the total number of bearers of the various categories, I will require notice. So far as the second part of the question is concerned, yes, Sir, there is a variation in the rates as mentioned by the hon. Member. But that depends upon the turnover or the sale of a particular commodity. If the turnover is more, the commission is less. If the turnover is less, the commission is more.

**SHRI KRISHNARAO NARAYAN DHULAP:** Sir, I seek your protection. About the number of bearers employed in the various categories, this information is absolutely necessary. It is a relevant question, I seek your protection.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** He requires notice for that. That is the practice.

**SHRI KRISHNARAO NARAYAN DHULAP:** But the main question is such that he should have.....

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Put your second supplementary.

**SHRI KRISHNARAO NARAYAN DHULAP:** If the nature of work of commission bearers is permanent, then why are they not turned into salaried bearers?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** Sir, in 1965, new scheme of employing bearers on pay-cum-commission basis, with a fixed minimum salary was evolved. A decision was taken, according to which commission bearers, although they were not treated as regular railway employees, were given certain facilities which are available to regular employees. Also, there is a process by which commission bearers could become regular railway employees.

**SHRI GULABRAO PATIL:** From the statement it seems that the Southern and Eastern Railways have got a uniform rate of commission, while the South Eastern Railway has got the highest rate of commission. Is it because the food served there is worse than that served on other Railways? May I know from the hon. Minister why they do not have a uniform scale for bearers who are serving purely on commission basis?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** As I have just now mentioned, the commission that is fixed depends on the commercial conditions. If the turn-over of a particular item is more, the commission is less, if the turnover is less, the commission is more.

**SHRI B. V. ABDULLA KOYA:** The catering service, especially in the G.T. Express, has become very bad. The other day I had the misfortune of coming by the G.T. train, and practically I was suffering for want of good articles. The rates are also very high. These rates, I understand, are Rs.3.50, Rs. 3.50 and 75 paise, for lunch, dinner and tea, respectively. The stuff supplied is very bad. Another thing is that these rates were fixed during the pre-emergency period. The hotels in Madras and other places have brought down their

rates and improved the quality of food. Even the refreshment rooms at Madras give fairly good food at Rs. 3.50, whether it is lunch or dinner. Therefore, I would like to the hon. Minister to do something in order to improve the system of catering.

Another important thing is that while the commission given to caterers in the southern region is shown as 10 per cent, I learn from the workers that the actual commission that they are getting is only 6 per cent or 8 per cent after deducting something by way of tax or something like that. Of course, the commission is shown as 10 per cent in the books. Also, the workers are working on commission basis for the last several years without being made permanent. Something will have to be done to improve these things.

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** Starting from the tail-end of the question, I would request the hon. Member to forward such cases where the commission paid is less.

**SHRI B. V. ABDULLA KOYA:** I have already written to the hon. Minister about this matter.

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** We will take appropriate action. Coming to the first part of the question about the rate for the food that is served in the various Railways, my information is that the rate has been decreased by 10 to 15 per cent on *a la carte* items. On the South Central Railway, even the Thali rate has been decreased by 10 per cent.

**श्री प्रकाश अहरोत्रा :** मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो रिटर्न प्राप्त होता है उसको कितने दिनों में रिब्यू किया जाता है ? जो रिटर्न घटती या बढ़ती रहती है उसको ध्यान में रखते हुये क्या एक या दो साल में उनको रिब्यू कर दिया जाता है ?

**श्री बूटा सिंह :** वैसे तो यह काम हर तीन साल के बाद होता है । परन्तु साथ-साथ

इस बात का भी ध्यान रखा जाता है कि जैसे ही किसी चीज की सेल बढ़ती या कम होती है, उसका रिब्यू होता रहता है ।

**SHRI MOHAMMAD YUNUS SALE-EM:** Sir, it is a fact that the quality of food which is available in the trains is really hopeless. Where the catering at the railway stations has been entrusted to private contractors, the quality of food is definitely superior. This is my personal experience. My friends may differ with me. I submit with full sense of responsibility that the quality of food is gradually deteriorating in the coaches: I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether such complaints have been brought, to his notice of not if 'yes', is any action being taken to improve the quality of food which is supplied to the passengers in the trains?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** Sir, it is a question of great concern for the Minister. In the last meeting of the Board, he was kind enough to direct the Railways to take severe action wherever there are serious complaints about the quality and quantity of food. We have given special powers to the General Managers and the Divisional Superintendents to cancel the contracts forthwith and to take the severest action against the departmental catering, wherever such things have occurred.

**SHRI MOHAMMAD YUNUS SALE-EM:** The hon. Minister has not understood the question. You are cancelling the contract when the quality of food served by the private contractors is bad. What about your own departmental catering?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** The severest action will be taken against them.

**SHRI MOHAMMAD YUNUS SALE-EM:** You don't take any action. Rather, you encourage them. Whenever I lodge any complaint, I received a letter saying: "I regret that inconvenience has been caused to you. We shall issue directives hereafter." But

no directives are issued. Every time we travel, we get hopeless quality of food.

**SHRI KAMLAPATHI TRIPATHI:** We shall be grateful if the hon. Member forwards specific cases to us. We shall take necessary steps.

**SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND:** Sir, my experience of functioning on the Northern Zonal Railway is that whenever complaints about catering are lodged, they are easily dismissed. No severe action is taken and many excuses are made. So, on this, I request the hon. Minister to see to it that more stringent measures are taken. But my question is as to why there is no catering on the Northern Railway, specially for persons travelling between Jammu and Delhi. We have extended the railway from some time past to Jammu, and people will have to pass major hours on the trains. The Srinagar Express starts at 4 o'clock and the Kashmir Mail starts at 8.15 p.m. and people will have to start very early. Will the hon. Minister see to it that some arrangements for catering departmentally are made on the Northern Railway, which is one of the two Railways where such arrangement are not provided?

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** It is a very good suggestion. We will certainly consider it.

**SHRI MULKA GOVINDA REDDY:** Sir, I would like to know from the Minister whether the Railway Ministry have decided to appoint catering committees at the central, zonal and divisional levels and, if so, when they are going to appoint these committees. I would like to know whether the bearers who are appointed to serve in these railways are asked to undergo some orientation course so that they can be clean and their uniforms are changed every day.

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** Yes, Sir. This is one of the recommendations of the Committee that was appointed to ameliorate the working conditions of

the bearers who are serving on the trains and at restaurants. About the first part of the question, the hon. Railway Minister has taken a decision to revive the national as well as the zonal catering committees immediately.

**श्रीमती सुभित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी :** श्रीमन्, मुझे थोड़ा आश्चय हुआ जिस तरह से सदस्य रेलवे के खाने के बारे में चर्चा कर रहे हैं क्योंकि अनुभव यह है कि 3 रु० 50 पैसे में जितना खाना रेलवेज देती हैं और जो खाने का स्टैंडर्ड है या क्वालिटी है वह दूसरी ट्रांसपोर्ट सर्विसेज से कहीं ज्यादा अच्छा है। इंडियन एयर लाइन्स के अन्दर 11-11 रु० कांटेक्टर्स एकएक ब्रेक फास्ट की ट्रे का लेते हैं और इतना इतना सा खाना देते हैं। तो साढ़े तीन रुपये में बहुत ही अच्छा खाना रेलवे का मिल रहा है, इस चीज के ऊपर तो मेरा कोई ऐतराज नहीं है . . .

**श्रीमती विद्यावती चतुर्वेदी :** उनको यह पता चल गया होगा कि एम० पी० ट्रेन में सफर कर रहा है।

**श्रीमती सुभित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी :** नहीं, एम० पी० की बात नहीं है; एम० पी० का थाल कोई विशेष नहीं आता है और मैं तो थर्ड क्लास में ट्रेवल कर रही थी . . .

**एक भाननीय सदस्य :** थर्ड क्लास तो नहीं अब रेलवे में . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** All the right, you have expressed your opinion.

**श्रीमती सुभित्रा जी० कुलकर्णी :** मेरा आपसे निवेदन है कि जो कर्मचारी खाना देते रहते हैं वे लोग सुबह 6 बजे से रात 11 बजे तक ड्यूटी में रहते हैं, उसके बाद उनके किचन के कमरे में आराम करने को दिया जाता है जहां उसके आराम की कोई सुविधा नहीं है। मेरा यह प्रश्न है मंत्री महोदय से कि उनके बारे में भी कोई व्यवस्था कर

रहे हैं कि नहीं ताकि वे अच्छी तरह सर्विस दे सके और इसके साथ ही जो बहुत ज्यादा खाना बांटते हैं जिससे कि खाना बरबाद भी होता है, थाल का थाल, इतना बड़ा भारी टोकरा भर कर खाना बरबाद हो जाता है, तो क्या इन दोनों बातों पर मंत्री महोदय ध्यान देंगे ?

**श्री बूटा सिंह :** बहुत अच्छा सजेशन है माननीय सदस्या महोदय का ।

**श्री श्याम लाल यादव :** मान्यवर, मैं इस बात के लिये रेलवे विभाग की तारीफ करूंगा कि जो हम लोग अक्सर दिल्ली से मुगल सराय की तरफ जाते हैं, हमने देखा है कि स्टेशन से थाल बन कर गाड़ियों में जाती है जिससे अच्छी सर्विस हो रही है, लेकिन एक निवेदन करूंगा कि राजधानी एक्सप्रेस में जैसा खाना मिलता है वैसा ही खाना अगर दूसरी लम्बी गाड़ियों में दिया जाए तो ज्यादा अच्छा होगा ।

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** It is a good suggestion.

**श्री बूटा सिंह :** मान्यवर, यदि वही किराया दूसरी ट्रेनों पर हो जाय तो हो सकता है । We are definitely doing our best to improve the quality of food that is being served.

**SHRIMATI SUMITRA G. KULKARNI:** Very good.

**श्रीमती विशावती चतुर्वेदी :** मैं मंत्री महोदय से यह जानना चाहती हूँ कि 5-7 महीने हो गये आपने कुछ जोनल कैंटरिंग कमेटियां बनाई हैं, क्या बात है इतना अरसा होने के बावजूद एक बार भी कमेटी की मीटिंग नहीं बुलाई गई, एक बार भी यह नहीं बताया गया कि हमारा स्टैंडर्ड मीनू यह है और जगह-जगह जाकर यह देखने की कोशिश की गई कि उसकी जांच करें कि वह कैसा है ताकि यह कह सकें कि जो मीनू है और उसका जो स्टैंडर्ड है उसके मुताबिक खाना मिलता है

कि नहीं ? तो क्या मैं मंत्री महोदय से निवेदन करूँ कि उन कमेटियों को जल्दी से जल्दी सक्रिय करेंगे जो खुद जाकर उनकी सारी चीजों पर ध्यान देकर निरीक्षण कर सकें कि व्यवस्था ठीक से चल रही है कि नहीं ?

**श्री बूटा सिंह :** आत्की सुचना ठीक नहीं है, हमने कई कैंटरिंग कमेटीज बनाई हैं और यह निर्णय लिया है मंत्री जी ने कि कई ऐसी कमेटियां बनाई जायें जो इस बारे में परामर्श दें और उसमें इस बात का भी ध्यान रखा जाये कि हमारी महिलायें जो खाने के बारे में अच्छा जानती हैं उनको भी शामिल किया जाये ।

**SHRI V. C. KESAVA RAO:** Sir, I would like to know whether the Ministry has received any representations from the bearers to the effect that their commission is very insufficient and that they are not able to maintain their families within that amount. Is the Railway Catering Committee considering this question?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** This question has been already put by another Member.

**SHRI BUTA SINGH:** Sir, such representations do come to us and we are taking action constantly, as I mentioned, on a category to category basis and we are trying to accommodate as many as we can.

**SHRI YASHPAL KAPUR:** Sir, I would like to congratulate the Railway Ministry for the excellent food that they are providing in the southern zone, especially the *sambhar-baat*, *dahi-baat* and the *janta meals*, costing only 55 paise. I have taken these meals only last month when I was travelling from Trichy to Madras. But, Sir what is the minimum amount that is paid to these bearers who are employed on commission? Is it pay-cum commission or *pay-kam-commission*?

**श्री बूटा सिंह :** 1965 में जो फैसला हुआ था, उसके मुताबिक पहले उनकी सैलरी

70 रु० थीं और जब से मिनिमम वेज के बारे में फैसला हुआ है तब उसे 194 रुपये कर दी गई है। मैं माननीय सदस्य का बहुत आभारी हूँ।

**Purchasing of cylinder heads castings by Railways from an American firm**

\*274 SHRI LAKSHMANA MAHA-PATRO:

DR. Z. A. AHMAD:

SHRI INDRADEEP SINHA:

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH

ANAND†

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of cylinder heads castings received from the American firm which makes the supplies to the Railways during the period from 1971 to 1976;

(b) the number of cylinder heads which lasted for the minimum stipulated period and the number of those which cracked within the warranty period;

(c) whether the American firm has refunded the cost of the defective cylinder heads to the Railways;

(d) whether it is a fact that Government had to make emergency purchases of cylinder heads from West Germany and got them airlifted on account of defective supply by the American supplier; and

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

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MOHAMMAD SHAFI QURESHI): (a) 2,445 for WDM4 class of locomotives on the Northern Railway.

(b) Out of 2,445; 2,409 gave a life exceeding the guarantee period of one year and 36 failed within the warranty period.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Jagjit Singh Anand.

(c) No. The warranty claim is under consideration.

(d) Emergency procurement was arranged due to delay in supplies from the normal supplier.

(e) 96 Heads were obtained from West Germany through M/s. Hunt Spillar, California (U.S.A.).

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: Sir, in view of the fact that the firm did not thought—according to the reply only to a small extent—live up to the warranty period, every single case of failure to serve till the warranty period is a serious case and in view of the fact that they had to airlift the components from West Germany, what action is the Department or the Ministry taking against this American firm?

SHRI MOHAMMAD SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, a claim has been lodged with the firm and the firm had asked us to ship these cylinder heads to the office of the firm in the U.S.A. but we have not done that. Instead we have asked the firm to arrange for inspection in India by deputing their representatives. The matter is receiving consideration but we have lodged a claim on the firm.

SHRI JAGJIT SINGH ANAND: In view of the great reputation that the American firms enjoy which is very clear from the fact that they have been selling us underweight food-grains, will the Ministry not take some more action than just requesting them to replace them and collect them from here? Will not the Ministry take some serious action?

SHRI MOHAMMAD SHAFI QURESHI: Sir, action can be taken only under the terms of the contract. We can do nothing beyond that.

SHRI KHURSHED ALAM KHAN: Normally, premature breakdown of the components indicates that the specifications laid down or communicated to the manufacturers were not correct. I would like to know whether the premature failure can