

SHRI BUTA SINGH: We have adequate stock. हम आपके सुझावों को फारवर्ड कर सकते हैं ।

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: Is it a fact that though the nine-year contract with the three big companies was to expire on the 31st December, 1975, the authorities renewed it in advance about $1\frac{1}{2}$ years ago? If these licences were renewed $1\frac{1}{2}$ years ago, though they were to expire only on the 31st December, 1975, what is the reason for it? Why were you so anxious to renew the licences $1\frac{1}{2}$ years before the period was to expire?

श्री बुटा सिंह : सभापति जी, इसमें एग्जाइटी की कोई बात नहीं है । एफीसिएन्ट नोटिस दिया गया है । करोड़ों रूपए के इनके एस्टेब्लिशमेंट हैं । इनको बेल-इन-टाइम नेक्स्ट इयर के लिए प्लान करना है । 18 से 24 महीने का टाइम एग्रीमेंट में प्रोवाइडेड है । It is provided in the agreement. So to say that it has been done in any anxiety is not true, Sir.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: If you are keen to give licences to the smaller people and co-operatives, why did you renew it $1\frac{1}{2}$ years ago? What was the need for it?

MR. CHAIRMAN: He has replied. Next question.

Agreement between Northern Railway and M/s. A. H. Wheeler and Co. (P) Ltd.

*122. **DR. V. B. SINGH:**

SHRI R. K. MISHRA:

SHRI HIMMAT SINGH:

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA:†

SHRI SARDAR AMJAD ALI:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) what are the terms of agreement between M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Co. (P)

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Harsh Deo Malaviya.

Ltd. and Deputy Chief Commercial Superintendent of the Northern Railway on behalf of the President of India.

(b) whether it is a fact that in the light of an earlier Government assurance to encourage cooperative ventures in book trade on Railway stations a Co-operative Society of Vendors and Hawkers applied for licence to be granted to it at Delhi Station; and

(c) whether it is also a fact that the Chief Commercial Superintendent and Divisional Superintendent turned down this venture and if so, what are the reasons for the same?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SARDAR BUTA SINGH): (a) A statement indicating the salient features of the Agreement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

(b) The Government policy is to encourage cooperatives of unemployed graduates for award of stalls at new stations and at stations where there is no bookstall at present but where one is considered necessary. However, an application from a cooperative society of vendors and hawkers for award of a contract at Delhi was received.

(c) Yes, as there was no vacancy of bookstall at Delhi.

Statement

(a) The following are the important features of the agreement between Messrs. A. H. Wheeler & Co. (P) Ltd. (licensee) and the Northern Railway (licensor):

1. The licensee shall have a good stock of books, newspapers, magazines, periodicals of all Indian languages and other European languages at the stations where they have the contract with the Railway.

2. The licensor has a right to permit the sale at the stations specified, otherwise through the licensee's bookstall, periodicals, books, etc. published by non-profit institutions like Rama Kirshna Mission, Sarva Seva Sangh, etc. For sale of other books, the licensee shall have the sole rights to sell at stations where he has the contract.

3. The licensee shall pay a royalty of 2½% per annum of the total sales turn over.

4. The licensor shall not be liable for any loss or damage to the licensee's bookstall or other contents, from whatever causes such loss or damage may occur.

5. The sale price of books and other literature shall not exceed the price charged for the same by booksellers in Delhi and the Administration has a right to check the price charged by the licensee.

6. The licensor reserves the right to require the licensee to sell specified books or periodicals.

7. The licensee shall keep adequate stock of publicity literature published by Publications Division of the Government of India.

8. The licensee shall not close down or remove any of the stalls without the permission of the licensor.

9. The licensor has the right of prohibiting sale or exhibition of any publication of an obscene or scurrilous nature and the decision of the licensor shall be final in this regard.

10. The licensee shall be given certain passes for carrying on the business.

11. The licensee shall observe all rules and regulations framed from time to time by the Administration in regard to the running of bookstalls.

12. The licensee shall not assign, transfer, charge or dispose of any right or privilege conferred by the agreement without the consent of the licensor. He shall not sublet the contract allotted to him.

13. The licensee shall pay electricity, municipal taxes etc. as fixed from time to time. The licensee is responsible for complying with all

the laws of the land such as Payment of Wages Act, Hours of Employment Regulation Act, Workmen's Compensation Act, etc.

14. The licensee shall pay a fair wage to the workmen. Fair wage shall mean wages paid for similar work in the neighbourhood.

15. The licensee shall engage salesmen and hawkers of good behaviour and character and ensure satisfactory service.

16. If the licensee commits any breach of the provisions of the contract or in the event of the licensee failing to discharge his obligation under the agreement in a manner satisfactory to the licensor, the licensor shall on giving three months notice in writing to the licensee have the right to determine this agreement without prejudice to the licensor's right to recover all arrears of amounts due.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA :

Is it a fact that while Wheelers and others are earning lakhs and crores of rupees, the Railway Board is very kindly providing them many hundreds of first class and second class passes to travel free on the Indian Railways? If so, will the Government consider stopping this concession to M/s. A. H. Wheeler and others?

SHRI BUTA SINGH : Sir, it is true that passes are given to these people to enable them to supervise their business at various stations. It is provided in the agreement itself. So, Sir, we cannot go back on what has been agreed to in the agreement.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA : Change the agreement.

MR. CHAIRMAN : He can consider it next time.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA : My second question is, here is a memorandum submitted by the Northern Railway Book Stall Divisions Association. It is a co-operative society. I

hope the hon. Minister has also got this memorandum. They wanted to have a stall for selling books at the Delhi Junction station. This was refused. Will the Minister kindly tell us whether they received this memorandum and, if so, what were the reasons for denying this stall to the Northern Railway Book Stall Divisions Association, which is a co-operative society, at Delhi Junction?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: Sir, it is true a memorandum was received, but unfortunately at the present moment, there is no book stall available at the Delhi Main Station to be offered to this vending co-operative society. That is why we could not accommodate the request.

SHRI HARSH DEO MALAVIYA: This is no answer.

SHRI G. LAKSHMANAN: Sir, in all book stalls I find only books in English and Hindi. There are so many national languages in India accepted by the Constitution of India. I know there are many stalls where there are no books in languages other than English and Hindi. Therefore, will the Minister consider the suggestion that in all the stalls, compulsorily books in all the national languages must be available?

Will the Minister give an assurance that in all book stalls books in all the national languages accepted by the Constitution of India will be available?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: It is a very good suggestion which I accept. But may I add here that I have found myself books of Tamil and Telugu being sold in Punjab. It is already there. It is not true that only English and Hindi books are sold. This is a very welcome suggestion....

(Interruptions)

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister says that it is a welcome suggestion and that he will examine it.....

(Interruptions).

SHRI KHYOMO LOTHIA: What is the amount of royalty paid to the Government by M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Co., from different stations for the year

1974? Secondly, in view of the difficulties to the passengers to locate book stalls where newspapers are sold, will the Government consider a clause in the Agreement requiring book stall contractors to employ newspaper boys who will sell newspapers in the compartments, specially in first-class compartments?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: So far as I remember, there is some arrangement by which newspapers are supplied on the trains. But even then, Sir, we are prepared to examine this suggestion. It is a good suggestion.

SHRI SANAT KUMAR RAHA: I want to know from the Minister what is the criteria for fixing the royalty? Is there any minimum and maximum ceiling on it, and what amount of royalty M/s A. H. Wheeler & Company has paid during the last three years?

SHRI BUTA SINGH: Sir, the question on royalty has already been replied by me. Normally, in the case of big book stalls, royalty is 2½ per cent of the total sale turnover. The royalty recovered from M/s A. H. Wheeler & Co., M/s Higginbothams (Private) Ltd. and M/s. Gulab Singh & Sons is approximately Rs. 3.9 lakhs, Rs. 16,000 and Rs. 29,000 respectively, per annum.

SHRI P. L. KUREEL Urf TALIB: From my personal experience I have to put one fact before the hon. Minister. In 1952 I was publishing a weekly magazine 'Social Reformer' for several years, and I asked M/s. A. H. Wheeler & Company to keep this paper for sale on their stalls. But their answer was that there was no space in their stalls. They did not accept my paper. Generally, I know that they take huge bribes from publishers of books and periodicals before allowing them to keep their publications on their stalls, and generally they give preference to cheap type of books which have a ready sale on the stations. Those books which are of a constructive value and aim at reforming society are not encouraged by them and are rejected.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: As is very well known, the hon. Member himself

is a very big social reformer. So I would like to know from him: Is he still publishing that magazine so that I can recommend it to M/s A. H. Wheeler & Company?

SHRI P. L. KUREEL Urf TALIB: I have stopped publishing it, because there was no market for it....(*Interruptions*). But I asked the hon. Minister to go into this question whether huge bribes are taken before allowing the books and periodicals in the Stall.

SHRI BUTA SINGH: Certainly I will look into it.

Oil Exploration and Production

*123. SHRIMATI RATHANBAI SREENIVASA RAO:

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR:†

SHRIMATI PRATIBHA SINGH:

SHRIMATI SARASWATI PRADHAN:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS be pleased to state:

(a) the estimated amount of oil reserve explored;

(b) whether it is fact that oil in oil bearing fields in Assam has depleted, if so, the extent of depletion during the last 10 years; and

(c) the period over which these reserves are likely to last at the present rate of exploitation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI C. P. MAJHI):

(a) The recoverable reserves so far established are of the order of 195 million tonnes of which 124.5 million tonnes remained to be exploited as on 1-1-1974.

(b) and (c) While discovered fields were being produced leading to a certain depletion of reserves, additional reserves were being discovered in the meanwhile. As such, against a balance

of 52.40 million tonnes of recoverable reserves in Assam in 1964, the recoverable reserves still available for exploitation as on 1-1-1974 were about 76 million tonnes. At the expected rate of production, the balance of reserves may last for about 15 years or so. Efforts are being made to establish additional recoverable reserves.

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR: Sir, I would like to know whether this decline of production or the yield was anticipated by the ONGC earlier or it was a sudden phenomenon. What concrete steps has the Government taken to prevent this decline so as to make it commercially viable because the performance of these oil-producing wells of Assam will definitely affect the general exploration programme in that region?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS (SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA): Sir, no oil field goes on giving oil. The average life of an oil field ranges from about 15 years to 30 years depending the quantity of oil there and the pressure that is there and so on. Therefore, it is inevitable that an oil field from where production starts will die one day. So, this depletion is a common phenomenon in all the oil fields the world over and we are trying to discover new oil fields in order to make up for the losses that are inevitable on account of the depletion of oil

SHRIMATI SUSHILA SHANKAR ADIVAREKAR: Sir, may I know whether, in view of the increasing crude prices in the world market and the depletion of the oil resources on account of the intensive exploitation thereof, The Government of Assam and also certain other States which are having the oil bearing regions have been pressing for a long time for increasing the rate of the royalties payable to them and, if so, what is the rate of payment of the royalty and the extent of the increase demanded by the State Governments?

SHRI K. D. MALAVIYA: Sir, there has been a persistent demand from the State Governments to increase the royalty paid for the oil that is being produced from the wells in these States.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shrimati Shushila Shankar Adivarekar.