

So far as the Metro cinema is concerned the Finance Ministry was dealing with this and I am given to understand that a Committee has recently been set up to negotiate the purchase of Metro cinema.

Affairs of Khadi and Village Industries Commission

*817. SHRI KALYAN ROY:†
SHRI S. G. SARDESAI:
SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA:
DR. Z. A. AHMAD:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to huge travelling, bills of the Chairman and other members of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission in 1972;

(b) whether any complaint has been received by Government regarding widespread corruption and links between some officials of the Commission and private industries and if so, whether C.B.I. has made any investigation in the matter; and

(c) what steps have been taken to improve the functioning of the Commission and the result thereof?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL, DEVELOPMENT (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) to (c). A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) No, Sir.

(b) A few cases of alleged corruption and mal-practices came to notice which were referred to C. B. I. for investigation.

(c) The Commission reviews its performance periodically and takes remedial measures to effect suitable improvements and remove deficiencies.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Kalyan Roy.

The Commission has streamlined its accounting procedures and process of Audit has also be tightened. Periodical inspection of units, agencies and centres are organised and Programme Evaluation Studies initiated in selected Industries. Further the Commission takes suitable administrative action whenever lapses, abuse of powers and other deficiencies are brought to their notice.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, it is unfortunate that the Khadi and Village Industries Commission is a cesspool of corruption and is in an utter mess. So the Public Accounts Committee after expressing grave disappointment stated that this Commission has not been functioning in an effective and business like manner almost throughout its existence. Full-scale employment has gone down; part-time employment has gone down; the production has gone down but the administrative expenses have shot up. I would like to know, from the hon. Minister who is very busy in giving licence to Tatas for expansion of leather industry, what is the amount of travelling expenses of the Chairman and other Members in 1967-68 and what is the corresponding figure for 1971-72 and what is the reason for the increase.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: At one time he criticises the giving of licence to Tatas and at another he criticises the Khadi activities and so I do not know where we are. As far as the Commission's functioning is concerned I can assure the hon. Member—perhaps he is talking about his term of the Public Accounts Committee membership—that we are trying to improve the working of the Commission and it is for the purpose of seeing to it—it is spread out throughout the country—that there are no abuses, the Members are undertaking more tours to check and to coordinate the activities of various State undertakings, so that abuses if any could be brought down

The hon. Member wanted the figures with regard to travelling expenses. In 1972-73 the Chairman incurred an expenditure of Rs. 22,000/- and the Members—there are five Members—together incurred an expenditure of Rs. 8,000/-.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: Sir, I seek your protection. I asked for 1967-68 and he has given figures for 1971-72.

SHRI C SUBRAMANIAM: I have got the figures for 1968-69. In the case of the Chairman the amount was Rs. 17,000 and Members. Rs. 65,000.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: My second question is this. The Public Accounts Committee has made adverse remarks stating that the Committee is disturbed that out of 65 cases of theft and fraud pertaining to the period 1956-57 to 1967-68, action has been completed only in eight cases. The Committee desired that the remaining cases should be finalised expeditiously. Is it not a fact that five cases were referred to the CBI, three cases were lodged and departmental action was taken in two cases? The PAC desired that, whatever action was necessary, should be taken expeditiously. I would like to know who are these gallant five officers who were caught in the actual act of corruption. What are their names and what departmental action, as desired by the PAC, has been taken against them?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: There were 5 cases and six officers were involved in it. The names are: Shri T. B. Bhatt, Director; Shri R. A. Thakkar Deputy Director, Shri V. P. Arya, Development Officer, Shri S. Vaidya, Development Officer, Shri M. S. Patel, Development Officer and Shri B. C. Desai, Development Officer. As regards Shri R. A. Thakkar, Shri V. P. Arya, Shri M. S. Patel and Shri S. Vaidya prosecutions have been launched against them and the case is pending. As far as Shri T. B. Bhatt is concerned, he has retired and, therefore, under law no departmental action is possible against him. Therefore, no action has been taken,

but the payment of gratuity has been withheld. Then, against Shri B. C. Desai, departmental action is pending.

SHRI KALYAN ROY: I put one simple question. I read out that out of 65 cases of theft and fraud pertaining to the period 1956-57 to 1967-68, action has been completed only in eight cases. The Committee desired that the remaining cases should be finalised expeditiously. What about the remaining cases? The PAC said that immediate action should be taken.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I would like to have notice for this question to give a specific answer.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: is the hon Minister aware that the Bihar Khadi Gramodyog Sangh has disbursed crores worth of loans which are not now recoverable and are being written off? In the connection is he also aware that the CBI is holding investigations into certain specific charges and, if so, what are those charges? I should like to know whether it is a fact that the Khadi Commission's building in Bombay, their offices and their accounts have not been gone into by the proper authorities, examined and so on. Such allegations are piling up. In view of that what comprehensive action is the Government going to take to stop the lotting that goes behind the sign-board 'Khadi and Gramodyog Commission'? Is this the way to serve the cause cherished by Mahatma Gandhi?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I do agree there have been some deficiencies in the functioning of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission and that is why during last year, 1972-73, and also during the current year we are trying to streamline and regularise its functioning. There were no Financial Advisers at various State levels. Now, we are appointing Financial Advisers also. We are trying to regularise these things and wherever we have found abuses we are trying to take action.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Mahavir Tyagi.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI: May I know what is the total amount of aid given to this Commission....

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: On a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, I have called another Member and he is speaking. Your point of order is out of time.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: You have not heard me. You can say I am out of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You should have raised the point of order before I called another Member.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: I am sorry, but I will remember it. All right.

SHRI YOGENDRA SHARMA: Has the Khadi Gramodyog Sangh in Bihar distributed one crore of rupees?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: You are giving information.

SHRI MAHAVIR TYAGI: May I know what is the total amount of aid given to this Commission by way of loans as well as by way of grants and how much is due for repayment?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I do not have the figures with me. Certainly I will give the information if the hon. Member puts a question separately. Or otherwise, I can send the information to him.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: He has stated that he is taking steps to streamline and rationalise the working of the administration of the Khadi Commission. He has also given a certificate that the Khadi Commission, by and large, is working satisfactorily. May I know what are the criteria for satisfaction? The Public Accounts Committee of the Lok Sabha in its Report for 1972-73 has said, and I quote...

"For this substantial amount (Rs. 289.93 crores)...."

That is, Rs. 289.93 crores have been given to the Khadi Commission up to now.

"... the Commission has disappointing little to show by way of achievement."

I want to know from the Minister whether he is aware that there is an article in the Femina now. Why it is printed in the Femina, I do not know....

AN HON. MEMBER: Why you say, "I do not know?"

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: He said, article in the 'Seminar'. It is showing a woman.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: It is only the 'Femina', you have not heard me properly.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, it is a reflection on you, I protest.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: With due respect to my aged and respected colleague, the Chairman, it is reported that a car is run to Bassein, 40 miles, to bring vegetables. It is also reported that the house rented for the Chairman is costing the Commission Rs. 2,000 p.m. and that the Vice-Chairman, Mr. Bharade, has spent Rs. 56,000 in travelling 15,000 kilometres within four months between Ahmednagar and Bombay. The Minister should immediately inquire, because he is a very conservative Minister, and I want to know whether he will appoint a Committee or a Commission. In your own department people are writing articles after studying and doing research on the working of the Board. I am only interested in seeing that the money spent should give the results. I request you: Enquire in your own department by associating some Members of the Opposition and of the ruling party so that something will come out.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Perhaps the article mentions that the

house rent is Rs. 2,000. But he is being given only Rs. 750 as rent—nothing more than that—including Rs. 50 towards water and electricity charges. And I am sure the Chairman is not rich enough to rent a house at Rs. 2000 p.m. That is the style of the article and that is its content, and that is “Femina” which, I am sorry, I do not read.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: Let the Chairman sue this paper.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: This rag should not be taken notice of. I am sorry you have brought it.

Therefore he is given Rs. 750 towards house rent including Rs. 50 towards electricity and water charges. And if the charge is made that he is being given Rs. 2000 p.m. as house rent, then that itself shows how far you can rely on this article, and I do not think that Mr. Ramachandran is rich enough to rent a house for Rs. 2000.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI: I never said about what he pays, but about what is being paid for that bunga-low.

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Everything printed is not necessarily true. If he goes by that, I am sure everyone of us will be in great trouble including the hon. Member.

With regard to Mr. Bharade, he is paid Rs. 750 per month as honorarium and only Rs. 400 per month as house rent allowance. As far as the total amount spent by the members—I gave the figure for the year 1972-73—it was only Rs. 89,000. I do not know how the Vice-Chairman alone could have spent Rs. 56,000; I am unable to understand that. But, anyhow, it may be on par with the house rent which is being charged there. I hope he would not give credence to what is printed in that rag.

SHRI T. N. SINGH: Sir, we are doing some Khadi work in some vil-

lages in the Allahabad and Banaras districts. From my experience I can say that it is high time the hierarchy that has been built up around the Khadi Commission was thoroughly overhauled. The problem, even before that, that I face today is every Ambar Charkha lady worker is demanding an increase of one anna because of the price rise which is not being given....

MR. CHAIRMAN: Kindly put your question, Mr. T. N. Singh.

SHRI T. N. SINGH:.....whereas the emoluments of the people in the hierarchy are quite high compared, I think, to their work. Therefore, may I know from the Minister whether he is taking any steps to make khadi a really workable proposition today because unless something is done for the workers this kind of building up a hierarchy in the Khadi Commission is not going to help?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: I do not know what the hon'ble Member means by “hierarchy”. I have already mentioned the honorarium or the emoluments which these people are receiving at the highest level. The Chairman gets Rs. 1,000 per month as honorarium and Mr. Bharade, the Vice-Chairman, gets Rs. 750/- as honorarium and you think this is too high an emolument to be paid to these people. After all, he was a Member of this august House. If you think that Rs. 1,000 is too much, then every one of us should examine what we are receiving in addition to our salary. Therefore, before we accuse others of receiving more we should also consider what we are getting. Our Members are appointed for various purposes. And in this case they have to live in the Bombay city. They have to live and carry on within a thousand rupees. That certainly is not high. I do agree that the wages to be paid in the villages have to be improved. And it is for that purpose that we are introducing more and more improvement in the Ambar Charkha to improve producti-

vity and at the same time to improve the wages also.

श्री भोला प्रसाद : सभापति महोदय, क्या मन्त्री महोदय बतायेगे कि खादी ग्रामोद्योग कमिशन के मधु-मक्खन पालन विभाग के मुजफ्फरपुर केंद्र की जो एजेंसी है उसके मातहत काम करने वाले जो क्षेत्रीय-जन है, फील्ड वर्कर्स है, उनको पिछले जून 1973 ई० से अब तक तनखाह नहीं दी गई है और अप्रैल 1966 ई० से मार्च 1967 ई० तक 5 रुपये प्रति माह के हिसाब से 12 महीने का मकान-भाड़ा-भत्ता अभी तक नहीं दिया गया है और अक्टूबर 1967 ई० से अक्टूबर 1968 ई० तक का 13 महीने की 20 रुपये प्रति माह के हिसाब से वेतन बढ़ोतरी उन क्षेत्रीय-जनों को अभी तक नहीं दी गई है और अप्रैल 1971 ई० से...

श्री सभापति : अब आप प्रश्न पूछिए न।

श्री भोला प्रसाद : यह प्रश्न ही मैं पूछ रहा हूँ।

श्री सभापति : इतना लम्बा प्रश्न नहीं हुआ करता।

श्री भोला प्रसाद : तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या इन क्षेत्रीय-जनों को, फील्ड वर्कर्स को, जिनको मामूली सो सवा सो रुपये तनखाह मिलती है और जिनकी कुछ मकान-भाड़े भत्ते की पांच रुपये की बढ़ोतरी हुई है वह इनके महानों से और पिछले वषों का वकाया नहीं दिया गया है, उनको यह वकाया देने के लिए यह सरकार कोई कार्यवाही करेगी और जो कमिशन के आफिसर इसके लिये जिम्मेवार हैं उनके ऊपर कोई कार्यवाही करेगी ?

SHRI C. SUBRAMANIAM: Sir, I am afraid this is too specific a question with regard to a particular place. I do not have the information with me. I want notice for this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

Atrocities Committed on Harijans

*818. SHRI GUNANAND

THAKUR:†

SHRI MAN SINGH

VARMA:

SHRI J. P. YADAV:

SHRI O. P. TYAGI:

SHRI V. K. SAKHLECHA:

SHRIMATI SITA DEVI:

SHRI NIREN GHOSH:

SHRI N. R. CHOUDHURY:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of atrocities committed on Harijans reported in each State during 1972 and so far in 1973; and

(b) the names of the places where these incidents took place?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS AND IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PERSONNEL (SHRI RAM NIWAS MIRDHA): (a) and (b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

The Governments of Assam, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Karnataka, Nagaland, Punjab and Tripura have no information regarding any "atrocities" committed on Harijans during 1972 and

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Gunanand Thakur.