

RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 1st December, 1972/the 10th
Agrahayana, 1894 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock,
MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

*385 [Transferred to the 7th December, 1972.]

SALE OF BANGLA DESH RELIEF ARTICLES IN THE MARKET

- *386. SHRI KRISHAN KANT †
SHRIMATI SAVITA BEHEN .
SHRI SUHRID MULLICK
CHAUDHARY :
SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA :
SHRI J. S. TILAK :
SHRI GURUMUKH SINGH
MUSAFIR .
SHRI M. K. MOHTA :
SHRI SALIL KUMAR GANGULY :
SHRI A. G. KULKARNI :
SHRI V. B. RAJU :
SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR :
SHRI ABU ABRAHAM :
SHRI SITARAM KESRI :
SHRI SANDA NARAYANAPPA :
SHRI V. K. SAKHLECHA :

Will the Minister of LABOUR AND RE-
HABILITATION be pleased to state :

(a) whether any investigations have been
made into the allegations of sale of Bangla
Desh Relief articles in the market in the
country, and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE
MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND REHABILITATION (SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA) :

(a) and (b) There have been certain press
reports alleging some relief goods for Bangla-
desh refugees received by the Indian Red Cross
Society and Oxfam having found their way
into the market. The Chairman of the Indian
Red Cross Society has denied the allegations.
Inquiries are, however, being made regarding
alleged leakage of Oxfam relief supplies and
certain further complaints. Findings are still
awaited.

† The question was actually asked on the
floor of the House by Shri Krishan Kant.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Is it not a fact
that whatever little smuggling or leakage may
have been, it is only because of some profes-
sional smuggling that goes on ? As a matter
of fact, all the material received was really
utilized for the refugees. Is it not a fact ? To
say that a lot of leakage has gone on is some-
thing wrong. Is it not a fact ?

SHRI BALGOVID VERMA : The relief
supplies from foreign countries are received by
three agencies (i) the Government of India,
(ii) Indian Red Cross Society, and (iii) some
autonomous agencies. So far as the Govern-
ment of India is concerned, there is nothing
wrong ; we have every account of all the arti-
cles received from foreign countries. So far as
the Indian Red Cross is concerned, the Presi-
dent of the Indian Red Cross Society has ex-
plained to the Press that nothing wrong has
gone with them. Some complaints have been
received regarding Oxfam material, particu-
larly rugs, that they were exchanged during
the course of transit by indigenous rugs. In-
quiries are going on.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT : Is it not a fact,
Sir, that Sir Robert Jackson, UN High Com-
missioner for Refugees, came here for investi-
gation and, if so, what was the result or the
report he has given ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : We have no
knowledge about this gentleman visiting India
for this purpose.

SHRI BRAHMANANDA PANDA : In
1964 also, during the Chinese aggression there
were reports that instead of dropping the sup-
plies on the front, things were dropped in the
Calcutta market. Here also it is the same
thing. There are so many rumours in the Press
that such things are now being sold in the
Calcutta market. I want to know whether the
Government would seriously take up the matter
and see that the culprits are brought to book ?

SHRI R. K. KHADILKAR : Sir, some-
times all these matters find expression in an
exaggerated manner. That is our experience.
So far as the handling of refugee relief material
is concerned, the Indian Red Cross has done
an excellent job. Even international organiza-
tions have appreciated their work. There might
be some cases—not of that magnitude to which
my hon. friend referred. The matter has been

taken up by the Red Cross Society and they are looking into all aspects of it

SHRI J S TILAK Whatever little refugee relief has found its way in the Calcutta market or Delhi market, why should the Government not seize the goods, as they do in the case of smuggled goods and then enquire about them? These anti social elements should be dealt with severely

SHRI R K KHADILKAR : I may mention one factor in this respect. First of all, when these little whisperings and complaints came to us, we tried to find out and locate whether such a material at all came in a consignment for refugee purposes and we discovered that there was no such material that was handed over for refugee relief. Something else was there. How could we seize that?

श्री गुरुमुख सिंह मुसाफिर : अखबारों में बहुत सी खबरे इस किस्म की छपी हैं और क्योंकि ऐसे मौके पर बाज दफा बहुत सी बातें प्रोपागेंडा के तौर पर भी छपी जाती हैं, इसलिए मैं जानना चाहता हूँ कि सरकार ने कोई ऐसी छानबीन की है कि उन खबरों में कितनी कुछ सच्चाई है, कितनी कुछ हकीकत है और अगर छानबीन की है तो क्या उसको कोई पब्लिश भी किया है लोगों की जानकारी के लिये।

श्री बाल गोविन्द वर्मा : शिकायतें हमारे पास आई थी कि कुछ मैटीरियल जो कि बंगला देश के रिफ्यूजीज के लिए आया था वह बाजार में बिक रहा है और उसके बारे में हमने जानकारी की। जैसा कि मैंने बताया, गवर्नमेंट आफ इंडिया को जो कुछ मिला है वह सब ठीक है उसमें कहीं कोई कमी नजर नहीं आई है और उसके बारे में कोई शिकायत नहीं मिली है। इंडियन रेड क्रॉस सोसाइटी से हमने पूछा तो उनके प्रेसिडेंट ने एक स्टेटमेंट दिया है प्रेस को और उसमें उन्होंने सब बता दिया है कि कितने रुपये का सामान मिला, कितना डिस्ट्रीब्यूट किया, कितना अब भी है और कितना ऐसा है जो कि बंगला देश को भेजा है। हाँ, ओक्सफाम के बारे में यह जरूर है कि कुछ कम्बल ले जाते समय ट्रक वालों ने बीच में यहाँ के कम्बलों से बदल दिया है। उसकी जानकारी

हम कर रहे हैं। जहाँ कहीं से भी हमको कोई जानकारी मिलती है उसको हम देखते हैं। हाँ, एक और बात है। कैंनेडियन हाई कमिश्नर जो इंडिया में है उन्होंने बताया कि वह कुल्लू गये थे और जो स्वेटर वहाँ बिक रहे हैं वह कैंनाडा के हैं और वह वहाँ बिक रहे हैं। हमने जानकारी की तो पता लगा कि वह कैंनाडा के नहीं हैं। हमने अपने यहाँ जानकारी की तो मालूम हुआ कि कैंनाडा से कोई स्वेटर नहीं मिला है।

श्री गनेशो लाल चौधरी : यह हाउस को बताइये तो अच्छा है।

श्री बाल गोविन्द वर्मा : हमारे जो रिहैबिलिटेशन के सेक्टर हैं उन्होंने पर्सनली कैंनाडा के हाई कमिश्नर को बताया कि आपकी जो शिकायत है वह ठीक नहीं है, हमारे यहाँ तो किसी प्रकार की ऐसी चीज नहीं है।

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM Sir, I must say that the Government answer is most unsatisfactory. Very detailed allegations have been made in the Press and I have got a whole bunch of newspaper cuttings on the subject, about thousands of cartons of baby food and thousands of blankets being lost and then being sold openly in the market. Naturally, the Red Cross Society has denied. But that is no reason why the Government should not make a detailed investigation. Will the Minister confirm as to what happened to the stock which remained in Calcutta at the time of the end of hostilities and about which there was some dispute as to whether it will be sent to Bangla Desh or used in India and whether it has been sent to Bangla Desh or whether it has been used in India?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : The hon. Member has drawn our attention to the newspaper cuttings. I may tell him that, as already stated here, whenever any complaints come to our notice, we look into them and try to satisfy ourselves. So far as baby food is concerned, it has been reported by the Indian Red Cross Society that there have been thefts to the extent of about 7 tonnes of their milk and also there was some loss in transit, rail as well as road. The total loss of milk powder is of the order of 245 tonnes out of 10,000 tonnes received by the Society. So, a complaint was lodged

and the Government have seized some material from some places.

SHRI ABU ABRAHAM : What about the stocks remaining in Calcutta ?

SHRI BALGOVIND VERMA : Most of the stocks which were over and above our requirements have been transferred to Bangla Desh. For example, the Indian Red Cross Society received assistance to the tune of Rs. 30 crores. Out of these Rs. 30 crores, Rs. 11 crores worth of goods had been utilised for the Bangla Desh refugees in India and relief supplies of the value of about Rs. 14 crores have been transported to Bangla Desh. Similarly, the Government of India has also transported much of the material to Bangla Desh and, over and above all that which we received from the foreign countries the Government of India itself is giving much help to the Bangla Desh Government.

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा : माननीय मंत्री जी ने अभी अपने उत्तर में बताया था कि विदेशों से शरणार्थियों के लिए जो राहत का सामान आता है उसको प्राप्त करने के लिए 3 एजेन्सीज हैं—गवर्नमेन्ट आफ इंडिया, इंडियन रेड क्रॉस सोसाइटी और अलग से राहत कार्य करने वाली एटानामस वाडीज—तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि क्या सेन्ट्रल गवर्नमेन्ट की तरफ से कोई सेन्ट्रल एजेन्सी भी ऐसी आपकी है, क्योंकि कोई भी गड़बड़ होती तो गवर्नमेन्ट आफ इंडिया बदनाम होगी, और कोई भी इस प्रकार की बातें जो हो रही हैं आपके ऊपर उनका दायित्व है। आपकी तरफ से भी सेन्ट्रल एजेन्सी इस प्रकार वर्क करती है कि जितना भी सामान, चाहे किसी भी एजेन्सी द्वारा आया हो, उसका हिसाब-किताब आपके पास ही है और जो डिस्ट्रिब्यूशन हुआ है उसका व्यौरा भी आपके पास है, तो फिर आप क्या इस प्रकार का व्यौरा अब तक प्राप्त नहीं कर सके ?

श्री बाल गोविन्द वर्मा : जहाँ तक बाहर से जो सामान सहायतार्थ आया है वह इंडियन रेड क्रॉस और आटोनामस एजेन्सी के द्वारा भी मिला है। जहाँ तक इंडियन रेड क्रॉस सोसाइटी है, उनसे हमने पूछ लिया है। जहाँ तक और भी एजेन्सीज हैं—“केयर” है, “ओक्सफाम” है

“कैसा” है, “वार आन वान्ट” है और कैथालिक रिलीफ सर्विसेज है—हमारा उनसे पूछने का कोई तुक नहीं क्योंकि ये डाइरेक्ट लेते रहे और बांटते रहे। उनसे हमारा सबध नहीं है।

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा : क्या ये डाइरेक्ट भी मंगा लेते हैं ?

श्री बाल गोविन्द वर्मा : डाइरेक्ट लाते थे और बांटते थे।

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा : इसका मतलब यह है कि आपका कोई नियंत्रण नहीं है।

ALLOY STEEL PLANT, DURGAPUR

*387. **SHRI KALYAN ROY :** Will the Minister of STEEL AND MINES be pleased to state :

(a) whether Governments' decision to change the product-mix of the Alloy Steel Plant at Durgapur has led to unrest among the executives of the plant ;

(b) whether they have submitted any memorandum to Government on this issue ;

(c) if so, what are the points mentioned in the memorandum ; and

(d) what are Government's views thereon ?

THE MINISTER OF STEEL AND MINES (SHRI S. MOHAN KUMARAMANGALAM) :

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) and (b) The question presumably refers to the decision regarding the product-mix for the expansion of capacity of the Alloy Steels Plant, Durgapur, which does not provide for an increase in production of stainless steel. There have been a number of representations from the Alloy Steel Executives' Association against this decision.

(c) The main points made in the representations are as under :

(1) The present product-mix of the plant is not economically viable. The finishing facilities are inadequate.