

RAJYA SABHA

Friday, the 9th May, 1969/the 19th
Vaisakha, 1891 (Saka)

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

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

IMPROVEMENT OF SUPER BAZAR

*232. SHRI CHITTA BASU: †
SHRI M. K. MOHTA:
SHRIMATI LALITHA
(RAJAGOPALAN):
SHRI S. A. KHAJA MOHI-
DEEN:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Super Bazar, New Delhi has earned any profit during 1967-68 and 1968-69;

(b) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(c) what steps have so far been taken for the improvement of the Bazar?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD, AGRICULTURE, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION (SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY): (a) Super Bazar, Delhi, sustained a loss of Rs. 13.04 lakhs for the year 1967-68, subject to audit. The position for the year 1968-69, will be known after the close of the cooperative year ending 30th June, 1969.

(b) The main reasons for loss are high promotional, administrative and operational costs, including the high rent of the building in Connaught Circus.

(c) The steps taken by the Co-operative Store Ltd., New Delhi, to run the Super Bazar profitably include: economy in establishment and operational expenses, rationalization of stock level, prevention of leakages streamlining of administrative and accounting procedures, standardisation of purchase policies and expansion of business turnover. The Managing Committee of the Co-operative Store Ltd., New Delhi, has also been reconstituted. The services of a senior Government official have been placed at the disposal of the store to work as its General Manager.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: One of the principal objectives of setting up such Super Bazars was to provide assistance to the consumers by way of supplying them goods of a better quality at a cheaper rate. May I know from the hon. Minister to what extent that particular object has been successful, or whether that particular object has been altogether defeated? If it is the latter case, what steps does the Government now propose to take to justify the existence of such Super Bazars which have been incurring losses for such consecutive years?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: The objective of the Super Bazar—that is, to sell quality goods at a cheaper rate as far as possible—still holds good, and this object is being pursued by the Super Bazars all over the country.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Is it successful?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: I am coming to that. I think, as far as possible, our efforts have proved successful in stabilising the prices and in supplying quality goods to the consumers.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: May I know whether it is a fact that the Super Bazar has got a machine accounting unit and, if so, whether

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Chitta Basu.

that particular unit is beneficial in running the Super Bazar efficiently?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: We imported a few accounting machines which we put into use in the Super Bazar. And in addition to these machines, we are using man-power also. These machines are not adequate.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: You mean automation itself?

(No reply)

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN): Is the Super Bazar earning more by letting out some counters to private parties and, if so, how much? Is it a fact that these items were a matter of heavy loss to the Super Bazar earlier?

My second supplementary question is this. Will the Super Bazar think in terms of consumers' benefit and give them rebates in the departments of groceries, vegetables, meat, etc., which are articles of daily consumption? Also, the consumer public feels that this Super Bazar is for the poorer and middle class of the community.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: Madam, some of the sections and services in the Super Bazar are being run under special arrangements made with . . .

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN): What is that special arrangement?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: I am telling you.

. . . suppliers and other parties on a commission basis or agency basis. This is done because in these sections we were incurring losses. But the Super Bazar exercises a strict control over the quality of goods sold and the prices charged by these people.

Regarding the second question, I may tell the hon. Member . . .

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN): Madam, he has not answered about renting to private people.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please be brief, and give specific answer.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: I have said that it is on an agency basis, that means on the basis of contract. (Interruptions).

SHRI CHANDRA SHEKHAR: Madam, I rise here on a point of order. The hon. Minister in his main reply has said that the loss in the Super Bazar is because of the high rent paid for the building. The hon. Member says that they are sub-letting certain portions of that and charging higher rents from the tenants. Both these statements are contradictory. Who is wrong and who is right?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I would request the Minister to give a specific answer.

SHRI K. CHANDRASEKHARAN: The Minister is admitting that private people are there.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: I have said that certain portions of the Super Bazar were running at a loss and therefore they made special arrangements with dealers and suppliers on a commission basis.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: About letting out?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: It is on the basis of contracts. If you want to call it sub-letting, call it so. I say it is a contract and it is a sort of special arrangement. It is true—I concede—that previously we were incurring losses in these sections. Now, we hope to make some profits in these sections. And I can also give to the hon. Member . . .

SHRIMATI LALITHA (RAJAGOPALAN) Madam, I want to say that he has not met my points so far

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN—It is Question Hour, not a discussion

SHRI M S GURUPADA-SWAMY Both points I have already replied to, that we had incurred losses. These arrangements now include the cafeteria, eatables, fruits, vegetables, meat, radio, motor parts and the like. We were incurring losses before and the Super Bazar authorities have subleased these sections to dealers

In regard to the other question about the margin of profit charged and the rebate given to the consumer—Madam, in respect of provisions, eatables and groceries, the margin is very small and we cannot afford to give any rebate. In respect of the other commodities, certainly we are allowing rebates

SHRI S A KHAJA MOHI DIEN Is it a fact that there are complaints from the public against the staff? Is there any proposal to appoint more qualified and well behaved persons and give them adequate and proper sales promotion training? May I also know from the hon. Minister to whom the building where the market is situated belongs, what is the rent paid and what is the agreement entered into? Is there any proposal to acquire the building?

SHRI M S GURUPADA-SWAMY The building belongs to the New Delhi Municipal Committee. We are giving every year Rs 5 lakhs plus one per cent of the total turnover of the business. And this is quite heavy. In the first year, we have paid something like Rs 9 lakhs or so in this regard

Regarding training given to the staff, this is being attended to on the spot. But let me tell the hon. Member that the Super Bazar had

to be started in a hurry. Therefore, trained personnel were not available at that time. Now, we are looking into this matter. Training is being given.

श्री मानसिंह वर्मा क्या माननीय मंत्री जी यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि सुपर बाजार में काम करने वाले कार्यकर्ताओं के लिये वेतन के अतिरिक्त और किसी प्रकार का प्रोत्साहन दिया जाता है। मैं पूछ रहा हूँ कि वेतन के अतिरिक्त उनको और किसी प्रकार का प्रोत्साहन है। Is there any other impetus?

श्री अर्जुन अरोड़ा चोरी का प्रोत्साहन होता है।

SHRI M S GURUPADA-SWAMY I want notice, Madam.

SHRI M M DHARIA Madam Deputy Chairman, may I know from the hon. ble Minister whether there was any change in the management of the Super Bazar? If so, after this change in the management, what steps have they taken to meet the various losses? And, secondly, may I know from the hon. ble Minister whether they have examined the question of continuing of Super Bazars in the whole of the country and if so, what are the difficulties in their way and how they have been able to succeed in meeting the demand of the people to have the necessities of life at proper rates?

SHRI M S GURUPADA-SWAMY Madam, the new Board of Management was appointed some time in July last year and they are making strenuous efforts to streamline the operations. They have given a sort of estimate, and as a result of the various steps taken they hope to save something like Rs 11 lakhs this year. In addition to this they have introduced various other steps by which they hope to improve the position this year. I do not say that we will be even by the end of this year. Perhaps the position this year will be far better than the previous years

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Madam, what happened to my next question? I had asked a pertinent question regarding the continuing of the Super Bazar in the whole country . . .

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: We have so far set up about 76 Super Bazars. I have got information about the working of the Super Bazars in the first year. At that time 38 Super Bazars were functioning all over the country and our information is that out of 38 Super Bazars, 23 are running on profit, and (b) in respect of the price charged by the Super Bazars all over the country they compare very satisfactorily well with the market price. As a matter of fact, the prices charged in the market imitate the prices charged by the Super Bazars.

SHRI LOKANOTH MISRA: The point that arises from the hon'ble Minister's reply is that some part of the Super Bazar has been sub-leased to certain private parties and he feels that quality standards have been maintained even by these private parties and they are making profit. If that is so, what was the difficulty of the Super Bazar in maintaining quality? Why do they run into losses? Has he been able to analyse the difference between the two managements and, if not, is he going to appoint a committee to find out what is the difference?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: Madam, one of the reasons for the losses in the past was the lack of experience on the part of the staff because it was started in a hurry, I concede. Secondly, the entire space of the Super Bazar was not utilised effectively. We have given to the Super Bazar something like Rs. 58 lakhs, and we have given guarantee for Rs. 80 lakhs. The Syndicate Bank has given this amount for its working capital. Still the Super Bazars felt paucity of funds. The new Board of Management thought that there should be effective utilisation of space. So wherever the Super Bazar management is

incapable of running certain sections, those sections some arrangements have got to be made; sub-lease, or contract or commission basis arrangements have got to be made with the parties concerned.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know, Madam, what is the capital of these Super Bazars? The Super Bazar is supposed to be a co-operative undertaking. What is the capital of the co-operator who manages it because it appears that the Government has given Rs. 58 lakhs and they are liable to pay another Rs. 80 lakhs when this Rs. 58 lakhs get wiped off by way of losses? May I know, Madam what is the capital with the co-operator and whether that capital will be written off in losses? What is the nature of this Rs. 58 lakhs? Are they loans or grants or are they a loot?

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: Madam, the hon'ble Member is well aware of the whole structure—the constitution, the powers, the bye laws of the Super Bazar. Let me answer his first point. So far, I think, by the end of March 1969 the Co-operative Ltd. has enrolled 3,823 members as shareholders and they have raised a share capital of Rs. 2,38,470.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Even better than the Birlas.

SHRI M. S. GURUPADA-SWAMY: But it is a co-operative. After all, it is not a Birla company . . .
(*Interruption by Shri Arjun Arora*) I do not want to enter into a dialogue.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We have taken enough time over this question. I only say this. I have given the figures of amounts given by the Central Government in this regard, that is, Rs. 58 lakhs share capital and loan and Rs. 80 lakhs guarantee. But in spite of everything I say that the Super Bazar movement has got to succeed in this

country. If there are difficulties, irregularities and shortcomings we have to see that these things are removed. I know there are vested interests in this country and they do not want this movement to succeed. So we are trying our best. I would beg of the hon'ble Members to remember that this is under the co-operative law and we do not come in the picture except helping them indirectly. I think in the interest of the whole community this consumer movement and the Super Bazars should succeed.

† TRAINING TO WORKERS ABOUT THE
ROLE OF PUBLIC UNDERTAKINGS

*12. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR:
Will the Minister of LABOUR AND
REHABILITATION be pleased to state

(a) whether it is a fact that the Central Board of Workers' Education has taken a decision to start training courses for acquainting the workers about the role and place of public sector undertakings; and

(b) if so, what is the nature of the scheme and when it is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN
THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR,
EMPLOYMENT AND REHABILITATION
(SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD): (a) Yes, Madam.

(b) It is intended to emphasise the importance of the public sector, its objectives and its role etc., in the training imparted to worker-teachers as also in the training given at the unit-level classes.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: May I know, Madam, how many workers have been trained so far under this scheme? What particular subjects have they been trained in and also if the emphasis has been more on their rights than on their duties? If so, has any assessment been made by the Government as to whether

the working of this Department has led to more trade union activities and more labour troubles and, consequently, loss in production, or has there been any increase in efficiency also?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD:
I will reply to the last part of the question first. The intention of this worker training programme is not to decrease the efficiency or the loss, but this movement of teaching the workers has been started to bring more efficiency and to inculcate in the worker not only a sense of rights but also of duties. I want to say that the workers have been inculcated the spirit of knowing the duties and rights both.

As for the first part of the question, under this scheme up till now we have trained 15,664 worker-teachers, and 8,40,072 workers at the different units. For this we have opened centres and sub-centres all over the country. Thirty are regional and 82 are sub-regional centres all over the country today.

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I would like to know if the hon'ble Minister is aware that this Board brings out certain publications and that there are certain bodies also, for example, the Institute of Labour Studies and other bodies as well set up by the Government which are bringing out various publications regarding labour affairs. May I know whether there is any Central co-ordination or is it a fact that the publications many a time are overlapping and are causing a loss of public revenues? If so, will the Government look into this and avoid this public wastage?

SHRI BHAGWAT JHA AZAD:
Madam, it is true that we have got different organisations which are working in the labour field. This particular organisation is working for the workers' training. The hon. Member mentioned about the Institute of Labour Studies. That is an