

CATEGORY-WISE ASSOCIATIONS OF
RAILWAY EMPLOYEES

641. DR. B. N. ANTANI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that category-wise associations of the railway employees, having a majority of members of the respective categories, are in existence in the Indian Railways;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Joint Consultative Machinery has been empowered to consider the service conditions, pay, allowances, hours of work of the railwaymen besides the Central Government employees; and

(c) if the answer to parts (a) and (b) above be in the affirmative, the steps taken for the representation of such associations, in that Machinery?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ROHANLAL CHATURVEDI): (a) Category-wise Associations exist on Railways but we have no information about the extent of their membership.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) According to the provisions of the Joint Consultative Machinery Scheme, representation on a Joint Council can be had by employees of any particular class only through their Association/Union duly recognised for the purpose. Since these sectional bodies are not recognised, the question of their representation in the Joint Consultative Machinery does not arise.

DR. B. N. ANTANI: Is the Minister aware that the reason for the cropping up of so many category-wise associations is that the recognised institutions have not been able to represent their case adequately and properly because they do not know what their sufferings are? Is it not a fact that the All-India Guards Council satisfy all the pre-requisites of recognition laid down in the Manual and

yet it is not being recognised under the plea of fragmentation, which is not just and proper?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Sometimes we hear complaints on behalf of some of our employees that their grievances are not properly reflected by the unions at the national or zonal level. As my hon. colleague pointed out, so far it has not been our policy to accord recognition to unions category-wise and, therefore, they are not being recognised. As regards the Guards' Council, I do not contest the point that has been advanced by the hon. questioner, but as it is not covered by our policy, it is not being accorded recognition. As I had pointed out in my reply to the general debate, we are going to consider all aspects of the matter *de novo*.

DR. B. N. ANTANI: In case the Joint Consultative Machinery has been empowered to consider the service conditions, pay, allowances, etc. what difficulty is there to provide for representatives on such consultative machinery from such category-wise bodies which claim to be in possession of facts, in a better way, relating to their working conditions?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: It is quite obvious, because the representatives who are there are chosen only on behalf of the recognised unions. As this union has not yet been accorded recognition, it is not possible for its representative to be there, though, of course, now it is engaging our attention.

SHRI T. V. ANANDAN: Is it not a fact that on the Indian Railways there are not less than 143 categories comprising of about 13.12 lakhs railwaymen? These category-wise organisations have now come into prominence because of the tendency of the political parties in this country to have a hold, everybody to have a hold on the very essential category of railwaymen who serve the nation. Is it also not a fact that if each cate-

gory is to be recognised there will be not less than 143 categories to be recognised by the Railway Minister and will he be able to satisfy these 143 category-wise organisations? Is it not a fact that the Joint Consultative Machinery is so constituted as to represent the all India bodies of the Central Government employees in the country and it had very recently dealt with the problems of the Central Government employees? There also is it not a fact that the guards and running staff have been given representation very liberally on these committees and organisations?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: I do not dispute the fact because you are yourself fully conversant with the matter, being the pioneer and one of the most respected railway employees' leader. It will become a problem naturally because there are so many categories.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know if the Government has taken into consideration the practice prevalent elsewhere in the country because elsewhere in the country under the Code of Discipline such regulations as the Ministry is forcing on trade unions in the Railways are not there? Why does he not fall in line with the rest of the country and adopt the recognition method enumerated in the Code of Discipline also on the Railways?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question Time over. Mr. Arora may go to the Minister and talk with him about the matter later.

12 NOON

SHORT NOTICE QUESTION AND ANSWER

'GHERAO' OF GENERAL MANAGER, SOUTH EASTERN RAILWAY

8. SHRI M. K. MOHTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the General Manager of the South Eastern Railway was 'gheraoed' on the 17th March, 1969 by railway employees demanding unconditional withdrawal of action taken against some of them in connection with the Central Government employees' strike on the 19th September, 1968;

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereto; and

(c) the steps taken by Government to safeguard the lives and property of the Central Government officials against such 'gheraos'?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ROHANLAL CHATURVEDI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This was highly objectionable and uncalled for.

(c) Since this is a law and order matter, we brought it to the notice of the concerned State Government.

SHRI M. K. MOHTA: Every peace-loving citizen is greatly perturbed that gherao has reared its ugly head once again. In view of the fact that gherao has been declared illegal even by the High Court, in view of the fact that the West Bengal Government's spokesmen are on record as saying that the police will not intervene in such activities as these are considered as lawful trade union activities, in view of the fact that the record of such gheraos in the past includes ill-treatment of officials including not allowing them to use public conveniences, will the Government consider the desirability of instructing either the Central Reserve Police or the Railway Police or any other authorities to protect the lives of at least the Central Government employees and the property of the Central Government as the West Bengal Government does not seem to be in a position or in a mood to protect them?

DR. RAM SUBHAG SINGH: Actually, Sir, it is a fact that the General Manager and other railway officials were put to untold hardship, but we got full co-operation from the