

Re. Starred Question Nos. 298 and 315

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 298

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: Sir, there is my question No. 312 Will you be good enough to combine the two together?

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a Calling Attention Notice.

SHRI SUNDAR SINGH BHANDARI: If you can, you can combine these two questions together.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 298

हैवी इंजीनियरिंग कारपोरेशन को नष्ट करने का षड्यंत्र

* 298. डा० भाई महावीर :

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव :

क्या औद्योगिक विकास तथा समवाय कार्य मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या यह सच है कि हैवी इंजीनियरिंग कारपोरेशन, रांची के छः मुस्लिम कर्मचारियों पर पाकिस्तान के इशारे पर उस संस्थान को तबाह करने के षड्यंत्र के लिये मुकदमा चलाया जा रहा है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो उक्त षड्यंत्र का व्योरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि उस प्रयोजन के लिये उन्हें भारत में पाकिस्तान हाई कमिशन के द्वितीय सचिव द्वारा वित्तीय तथा अन्य सहायता प्रदान की गई थी; और

(घ) यदि हां; तो सरकार ने पाकिस्तान की इस प्रकार की शरारतें रोकने के लिये क्या पग उठाए हैं ?

t [CONSPIRACY TO DESTROY HEAVY ENGINEERING CORPORATION

*298. DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: J SHRI J. P. YADAV:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state: _____

t[] English translation.

\$The question was actually asked Mahavir.

(a) whether it is a fact that six Muslim employees of the Heavy Engineering Corporation Branch, are being prosecuted for conspiring to destroy that institution at the instance of Pakistan;

(b) if so, what are the details of the conspiracy;

(c) whether it is a fact that they were given monetary and other help by the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in India for the purpose; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken by Government to prevent such activities by Pakistan?]

t[THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE

औद्योगिक विकास तथा समवाय कार्य मंत्रालय में उपमंत्री (श्री भानु प्रकाश सिंह) :

(क) जनवरी, 1964 में भारी मशीन निर्माण संयंत्र में हुए अग्निकांड के संबंध में पुलिस द्वारा भारी इंजीनियरी निगम के 6 मुस्लिम कर्मचारियों पर दोषारोपण किया गया था। उनमें से अब 4 व्यक्तियों पर रांची के सेशन जज की अदालत में अभियोग चल रहा है।

(ख) से (घ) दोषी व्यक्तियों पर सेशन अदालत में भारतीय दंड संहिता की धारा 436 तथा 120 (ख) तथा भारतीय सुरक्षा नियमों के नियम 36 (4) के अन्तर्गत मुकदमा चल रहा है। मामला अदालत के विचाराधीन है।

MINISTRY OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI BHANU PRAKASH SINGH): (a) Six Muslim employees of Heavy Engineering Corporation were charge-sheeted by the Police in connection with the fire incident in Heavy Machine Building Plant in January 1964. Of these, four persons are now facing trial in the Sessions Court Ranchi.

>n the floor of the House by Dr. Bhai

(b) to (d) The accused persons are being tried by the Session Court under Section 436 and 120 (b) of the I.P.C and rule 36 (4) of the Defence of India Rules. The case is *sub-judice*.]

डा० भाई महावीर : श्रीमन्, आपने वहाँ के जो कर्मचारी इस मामले में आये हैं उन पर मुकदमा चल रहा है यह बताया। लेकिन आपने यह नहीं बताया कि पाकिस्तान के हाई कमिश्नर के किन्हीं कर्मचारियों से उनको इस मामले में प्रोत्साहन सहयोग या सहायता मिली थी या नहीं और यदि मिली थी तो उन कर्मचारियों के बारे में सरकार ने क्या कार्रवाई की है।

श्री फखरुद्दीन अली अहमद : मैं इस वक्त आपसे यह कहना चाहता हूँ कि ये मामला सब-जुडिस है और जब तक हमें फाइनल डेसीजन आफ द कोर्ट मालूम न हो, उस वक्त तक हम इसमें क्या करना चाहते हैं, यह बता नहीं सकते। जब हमारे पास डेसीजन आ जायगा उसके बाद हम इस पर गौर करेंगे। अभी ये तमाम मामलात कोर्ट के सामने हैं और सबजुडिस है और इस लिये अभी कुछ कहना बहुत मुश्किल है।

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Sir, the question has not been answered . . .

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: Sir, on a point of order. In view of the fact that the Minister has said that the matter is sub-judice, there should be no question about it because the well established parliamentary convention is that we do not discuss even during the question Hour matter which are *sub-judice*.

श्री सुन्दर सिंह भंडारी : लेकिन सबजुडिस कौन सी चीज है। जो सबजुडिस नहीं है उस पर तो चर्चा हो सकती है।

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: My question did not concern anything which is under the consideration of the court. I had asked if there are certain cases in which those employees of the project are involved and whether they are being proceeded against. Is it

not a fact that some employees of the Pakistan High Commission were also there and, if so, are they also being prosecuted in any manner?

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: No, Sir, this question will be . . .

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: Let the Minister reply.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: I am on a point of order. (*Interruptions*) Six workers, irrespective of their religion . . . (*Interruptions*). . . have been unnecessarily brought in both by the J questioner and the Deputy Minister. These six persons are workers, citizens of India under trial. Whether they engaged in sabotage or not is the fact for which they are being prosecuted. The matter is under . . .

(*Interruptions*)

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : यह क्वेश्चन पूछा ही नहीं गया है। जो अखबार की न्यूज़ है उसके सम्बन्ध में है।

j SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Sir, I would like to say on the point of order raised by Mr. Arora that I entirely agree that so far as the particular matter before the court is concerned, such questions cannot be raised. But now he asks whether it is a fact that they were given monetary and other help by the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether this issue is also before the court. If it is before the court, then there should not be any supplementaries. But if this issue is not before the court, this House has every right to have a supplementary.

SHRI P. C. MITRA: This issue is before the court I know.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, so far as this matter is concerned, the matter was inquired into by no less a person than a retired Judge of the Allahabad High Court, Mr. J. Mukherjee and the Report of that inquiry was placed before this House. And I wish the hon. Members had gone through that Report. And if they had

gone through that Report, this question would not have been put. And for that purpose, I would just like to read the conclusion of that Report which was placed before this House on 3rd October 1964. This is the report of the High Court Judge:

- (i) Slackness in respect of security arrangements;
- (ii) The strength of the fire fighting personnel is inadequate;
- (iii) Fire-fighting arrangements needs tightening up;
- (iv) Lack of sympathy and help from the local governmental and other authorities;
- (v) Dissatisfaction among the workers;
- (vi) Need for delegation of powers and decentralisation of functions;
- (vii) Desirability of making H.E. C. a holding company with a Managing Director for each subsidiary;
- (viii) Desirability of appointing Service Commission for all public sector undertakings;
- (ix) Need for a Central Security Force for public sector undertakings;

and he indicated that sabotage was also likely because of the fire. And that is sabotage. Sir, it would be very prejudicial to answer this question; unless and until all these matters which are being gone into by the court are thrashed out it will not be possible for me to say anything.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I have a submission to make. Whereas it is true that we should not ask questions relating to matters sub *judice* it is also necessary for us to be vigilant that the opportunity of Questions is not utilised for a particular purpose. Now, Sir, the hon. Minister should have told that in the charge-sheet filed or in the report there is no reference whatsoever to sabotage at the instance of Pakistan. He can easily say this thing and set the matter at rest; otherwise a lingering impression will be -created . . .

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Mr. Chairman, how can he say that?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: From what he has read out, Mr. Chairman, the impression is not clear. He should say whether there is anything at the instance of Pakistan . . .

SHRI A. D. MANI: On a point of order. Can we discuss a case on the floor of the House which is sub *judice*?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, so far whenever something happens it is attributed to either Pakistan or China. I should like to know whether it is so. If it is so let the Minister say so and if it is not it should be strongly repudiated that it is not so. It creates a wrong impression among the communities.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the gentleman putting the question want to put a second question?

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: I beg to submit that even my first question has not been answered. I do not know what purpose is served by reading from that report. My simple question was whether in the charge-sheet there is a mention of any employees of the Pakistan High Commission having engineered or helped the sabotage. If he wants to say that there is no such charge he can very well come out with that answer. But if he feels that there is a charge, let him say so and also say that it is sub *judice* and is being enquired into by the court.

My second question is that in view of the fact that there is an increasing evidence of such activities by people who are deriving help from Pakistan in various projects—there are occasions when railway lines have been sabotaged—there are activities which spell danger to the security of the nation, does the hon. Minister have in view any scheme to inquire into the antecedents of people who can have or do have any connections with the Pakistan High Commission or the people in Pakistan? If it is so, does he not feel the necessity of a scheme in the interest of the country's safety?

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: As I have already stated, the matter was immediately enquired into in

1964 by no less a person than a retired Judge of the Allahabad High Court who indicated that there was likelihood of sabotage. Soon after that, as the hon. Members are aware, police investigation was started, and as a result of police investigations six persons were charge-sheeted. Against that charge-sheet there was an appeal, review and so on, and two of them were discharged. Against the four of them the matter is pending before the Sessions Court. Unless and until the whole matter is gone into, evidence is placed before them and decision is taken, how is it possible for me to say anything?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ajit Prasad Jain.

SHRI J. P. YADAV: Sir . . .

SHRI A. P. JAIN: I have been called upon. I am not going to yield.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन्, हमारा प्रश्न पहले पूछने का अधिकार है, यह पाइन्ट आफ आर्डर नहीं है, प्रश्न पूछने का अधिकार हमारा है, इनका नहीं है।

SHRI A. P. JAIN: Mr. Chairman, you have called me to speak. Sir, this is a very serious matter and the issues that have been raised can raise serious suspicion against the minority community. It is a very serious thing to say . .

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : बिना पाइन्ट आफ आर्डर के लोग बोले जा रहे हैं।

SHRI A. P. JAIN: ... I should like to know whether it is a fact that Muslim employees . . . (Interruption by Shri J. P. Yadav) Let me say. The question is very specific. Part (c) of the question says:—

"Whether it is a fact that they were given monetary and other help by the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in India for the purpose;"

That is a part of the question. Now, it may or may not be a fact. But if this question remains unreplyed it will create great suspicion in the country

and the question whether they were getting monetary assistance or not is certainly not *sub judice*. The question as to who committed sabotage is *sub judice*. So I would request that it is in the interest of the Minister, it is in the interest of the country that he should clarify the issue and say whether it is just an allegation or whether any actual help has been given or not given by the Pakistan High Commission or the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I may point out that the matter was enquired into by Mr. Mukherjee, a retired Judge of the High Court and in his recommendations . . .

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : यह 64 की बात है, 64 का रिफरेंस बारबार दे रहे हैं 1968 में।

MR. CHAIRMAN: You have stated that.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Let me finish. And in his recommendations he never indicated anything of that kind. Today there is no evidence before us to say that any money was given by Pakistan. Unless and until it is proved we cannot say anything.

(Some hon. Members stood up)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Fifteen people have stood up. I do not know whom to ask and whom not to ask. I would ask the questioner to put his second question.

DR. BHAI MAHAVUI: I have put the second question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: *Per se* it has been answered. What is your second question?

DR. BHAI MAHAVIR: In view of the fact that there are repeated complaints of Pakistan engineering sabotage in the various projects does the Government have any plan to check-mate that by enquiring into and verifying the antecedents of people in the

Pakistan High Commission? If not, is it not a dereliction of duty because it means endangering the security of the country and the steel projects?

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, nothing has come to our notice that any such activities are indulged in there. We are taking proper action not only against sabotage by Pakistan but by any person so that the plants can be kept safe.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : मेरा यह कहना था कि जो उनका पहला जवाब था वह गलत था। 29 जनवरी 1964 को सेन्ट्रल कास्टिग एंड फोर्जिंग स्टोर में भीषण अग्निकांड हुआ था जिसमें 1 करोड़ रुपए का नुकसान हुआ था उसमें जो जांच की गई थी उसी जांच का रिफरेंस इन्होंने दिया है। उस रिपोर्ट में भी कहा गया था कि वहां पर सेबोटैज का आसार है। साथ ही साथ सेन्ट्रल और प्राविशियल सरकार की जो नेगलोजेंस थी उसकी पूरी लिस्ट है रिपोर्ट में, जिसको मंत्री महोदय ने पढ़ा है। 1964 में जो सेबोटैज हुआ उस तरह के सेबोटैज 5 बार हैवी इंजीनियरिंग कारपोरेशन में हुए जिसमें 50 लाख से लेकर 1 करोड़ रुपए तक का नुकसान हुआ है और इस तरह का सेबोटैज बराबर होने की सम्भावना बनी हुई है। उस सेबोटैज को बढ़ाने के लिए सरकार ने के० डी० मालवीय को भेजा है जो पीकिंग-पन्थी हैं और सभाएं करके कहते थे कि नक्सलवाड़ी जैसी स्थिति उपस्थित नहीं करोगे तो तुम्हारा कोई अधिकार नहीं मिलेगा। सभाओं में उनको पूछा गया था कि अगर इस तरह का सेबोटैज होगा तो इसका माओत्सेतुंग कौन होगा। यही नहीं उन्होंने रशियन साहित्य को बेचने के लिए कारखाने में बाहर के आदमी को पास भीतर जाने का दिया है। हम सरकार से यह जानना चाहते हैं कि सेबोटैज को रोकने के लिए व्यवस्थित रूप से केन्द्रीय सरकार ने अब तक क्या किया है ?

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, on a point or order . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: You should not mention about it.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : तो मैं यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि व्यवस्थित रूप से क्या किया है।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do not make any reference to any particular person.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : आखिर उन्होंने सवाल का जो जवाब दिया था . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, this is not the time for making a lecture on some matters. Kindly sit down.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन्, मैंने जो सवाल किया है वह इससे सम्बन्धित है इसका उत्तर आना चाहिए।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Have you any reply for Mr. Yadav?

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, how does Mr. Malaviya come into this question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Malaviya has nothing to do with this question.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : श्रीमन्, मैंने प्रश्न इस लिये पूछा था कि 29 जनवरी, 1964 को जो कांड हुआ जिसमें 1 करोड़ रुपये का हैवी इंजीनियरिंग कारपोरेशन को नुकसान हुआ उस पर जो कमेटी बैठी थी उसकी रिपोर्ट उन्होंने दी और इसीलिये मैंने भी पहले कहा था कि 1964 ई० की जो जांच है और 1968 ई० का आज जो कांड हुआ उसकी बाबत में उसको लेना चाहते हैं और इसीलिये मैंने उसका रेफरेंस दिया। जब 1964 ई० में कांड हुआ और जब 1968 ई० में यह कांड हुआ और जब 1968 ई० में रिपीटीशन हुआ तो उसके लिये आपने क्या किया। हम एक स्पष्ट जानकारी जानना चाहते हैं। जो सबजुडिस मैटर है उसको इसमें नहीं लाता, मैं तो यह जानना चाहता हूँ कि जो चार्ज शीट दी गई है वह किन लोगों पर है और कौन क्या चार्जशीट में है और उस चार्ज-शीट के द्वारा क्या यह स्पष्ट होता है कि ये लोग उसमें हैं और उसमें दूसरे लोग भी हैं ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: You put a separate question or give a motion.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : सबजुडिस कह कर बहुत सी बातें छिपाई गई है। हमारा मतलब यह है कि जो चार्ज शीट दी गई है चार्ज-शीट दी गई है या नहीं दी गई है तो चार्जशीट में क्या क्या कहा गया है, क्या उसमें पाक का हाथ भी बताया गया है ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I told you, Mr. Yadav, you put a separate question about it. Or give a motion for a discussion on that report.

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव: सेपरेट क्वेश्चन से क्या होगा। श्रीमन्, 250 करोड़ रुपय के प्लॉट को क्या इस तरह से जाने देंगे। It is a national property of Rs. 250 crores and every year we incur a loss of Rs. 1 crore. इतने इम्पार्टेंट युनिट में पाकिस्तानी लोग लगे हुये हैं। उससे भारी अभियंत्रण की रक्षा के लिए क्या व्यवस्था की गई है ?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I have already told you; you please put a separate question about it. Mr. Murahari.

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI: Sir, I would like to have a specific reply from the Minister because all the time he has been trying to avoid a straight answer to the question. Sir, the question is, whether the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in India had given some monetary help to them. I would like to know whether there was any specific enquiry conducted regarding this particular matter. The Minister has been saying all the time that a judge had enquired into it and he had given a report and the report only says that there is evidence of sabotage. The implication of the question here is that the sabotage emanates from the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission. Therefore, I would like to know whether the Government conducted any specific enquiry into this matter, as to whether the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission was involved in this and, if so, what the findings are.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I have already said that we have to consider this matter in two categories. One is the enquiry conducted by Justice Mukherjee in which there is no indication, except that there was an indication of some sabotage. And soon after that, police investigation into it was done, and as a result of that the matter is before the court. And what confessional statements have been made . . .

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI: What about the specific allegation?

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: And what confessional statements have been made . . .

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI: Sir, he is avoiding an answer to my question. It does not help either the Minister or us.

(Interruption)

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: What confessional statements have been made with regard to that sabotage, I am not going to disclose it because it is *sub judice* and it will be unfair for me to say anything about it

SHRI GODEY MURAHARI: That means that they have confessed that the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission was involved.

श्री राजनारायण : श्रीमन्, प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर। मेरा प्वाइंट आफ आर्डर यह है कि क्या यह सरकार के लिए उचित है कि ऐसा उत्तर दे जिससे सारे देश में एक भ्रम पैदा हो ? इस-लिये मंत्री को उत्तर निश्चित, डेफिनिट, कांक्रिट देना चाहिये। बार बार यहां लोग कह रहे हैं, हमारे अजित प्रसाद जी जैन ने भी यही कहा, गोडे मुराहरि जी ने भी यही कहा और ये लोग भी यही पूछ रहे हैं। अगर सरकार नहीं जानती तो कहे कि इसकी जानकारी नहीं है, नोटिस चाहिये।

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : जानकारी है।

श्री राजनारायण : उसमें इस तरह का लम्बा बयान दिया कि जांच रिटायर्ड जज ने किया और रिटायर्ड जज की रपट पढ़ने से यह होता है वह होता है, तो मंत्री जी के बयान से इस देश में यही भ्रम होगा कि पाकिस्तान के द्वितीय नम्बर के सचिव ने उसको मानेदारी हेल्प किया . . .

श्री गोडे मुराहरि: वह तो मानते हैं।

श्री राजनारायण : . . . सब यही समझेंगे। चाहे मंत्री जी अपने को सैटिस्फाई कर लें . . .

श्री फ़ख़रुद्दीन अली अहमद : आप जो चाहें कह सकते हैं लेकिन यह सब ऐसे नहीं . . .

श्री गोडे मुराहरि : अगर यह सही है तो आप इसके बारे में क्या कर रहे हैं।

श्री जगदम्बी प्रसाद यादव : कर नहीं सकते हैं तो . . .

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I am helping the Minister to clarify things. I would not like things to be confused or clouded. Kindly refer to part (c) of the question. May I know from the hon. Minister whether he is aware of such an allegation being made, apart from the source of this questioner, that the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in India had made certain monetary payments and so on? Has he come across an allegation of this kind from any other source, apart from the source of this question and, if so, what is that source? If he has not come across any such allegation apart from the notice of this question, let him say so in the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hon. Minister may say "Yes" or "No."

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, as I have already said, so far as the report is concerned, there is nothing. But so far as the case that is going on before the court is concerned, there is some confessional statement which has been made and I would not like to disclose it . . .

(Interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN: I will be very glad if the Minister can consider and reply whether he has any knowledge of it or has no knowledge.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: I have no knowledge.

SHRI BHUPESH GUPTA: Sir, I am not dealing with the sub judice matter at all. An impression is being created as if there is some hush-hush. I am confining myself to part (c) of the question which asks "whether it is a fact that they were given monetary and other help by the Second Secretary of the Pakistan High Commission in India for the purpose." The hon. Minister may please tell the House whether he has come across such an allegation from any other source, apart from the source of this question and, if so, what that source is.

SHRI FAKHRUDDIN ALI AHMED: Sir, I have already said that some confessional statement has been made about which I do not even have any knowledge; it will be found out when the case is concluded and so on. Besides that, I have no knowledge.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Sir, I have a submission to make.

(Interruption)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Next question. No more.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Sir, on a point of order . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No point of order. I have called the next question.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Sir, I want your direction on this matter . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: That question is over.

SHRI P. C. MITRA: Sir, people on this side do not get any chance.

SHRI KRISHAN KANT: Sir, I do not want to ask any question. I want to mention it for your orders which you may give today or tomorrow . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No, no, I am sorry, Mr. Krishan Kant. I shall be very glad if you can explain it to me in my chamber, and then I shall see to it.

Next question. Mr. Chitta Basu.

UNDERGROUND RAILWAY IN CALCUTTA AND BOMBAY

*299. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to refer to the reply to Unstarred Question No. 703 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 5th August, 1968 and state:

(a) whether the Study Team on Metropolitan Transport has since submitted its report on the feasibility of laying a network of underground railways in Calcutta and Bombay;

(b) if so, whether it has been examined by Government;

(c) whether any technical assistance has been sought from any foreign country for the project; and

(d) if so, the names of those foreign countries?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI ROHANLAL CHATURVEDI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) to (d) Do not arise.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Sir, in a newsletter from Paris published in the Amrita Bazar Patrika of August 5 last . . .

SHRI A. D. MANI: Not a very reliable paper.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: He says it is not a reliable paper. But is Hitauda very reliable? Now, let me come to my question. In a newsletter from Paris published in the Amrita Bazar Patrika of August 5 last, it has been said:

"The Railway Minister, Mr. C. M. Poonacha, said India would seek Soviet technical assistance for laying a network of underground railways in Calcutta and Bombay."

May I know if this is correct and, if so, what has been the reaction of the Soviet Union regarding the proposal made by the Government of India?

SHRI C. M. POONACHA: Sir, the news item does not have any basis.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Apart from the report of the particular news item, may I know whether the Government of India is contemplating to have any technical assistance from the Soviet Union in the matter of laying the underground railway in Calcutta?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister has stated that there is no basis for this question.

SHRI CHITTA BASU: Sir, he has said there is no basis for the press report. Let him reply.

SHRI C. M. POONACHA: Sir, this matter is still under the examination by a team called the "Metropolitan Transport Team" constituted by the Planning Commission. The team is still examining the whole question, its technical and other aspects. As such, no final proposal is before the Government as to whether there should be an underground railway system or an elevated railway system. These matters and other technical aspects of the question would be studied and when a final proposal is before the Government, the Government will be able to make up their mind as to whether they should seek some foreign assistance or whether they could undertake it on their own.

SHRI M. M. DHARIA: Mr. Chairman, Sir, this matter regarding the cities of Bombay and Calcutta is under the consideration of the Government as per my information, for the last 15 years. Every time it is being stated by the Government that the matter is under their consideration, that teams are appointed, etc. Is the Government aware that there is a heavy rush, a heavy congestion, in these two cities? An underground railway is the imperative and urgent need of these two cities. Will the honourable Minister assure this House that this matter will be expedited and that the Government will take a decision whether there should be an underground railway or whether there should not be an underground railway? Otherwise, the honourable Minister should make it clear