

SHRI D. SANJIVAYYA: I do not agree with the statement of the hon. Member that the conditions of labour in the State-owned collieries are not as good as in the private sector. The conditions are quite good, but disputes arise and we will have to settle them.

PASSPORT TO SHEIKH ABDULLAH

("SHRI SANKAR PRATAP-

j SINGH DEV: t

•733.*| SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: (^SHRI
G. K. KAPOOR:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to refer to the answer given to supplementary questions on Starred Question No. 152 in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th November, 1964 and state:

(a) whether Sheikh Abdullah has since applied for a passport to go abroad early next year; and

(b) if so, to which countries and for what purpose he is going abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON) : (a) and (b) Sheikh Abdullah has applied for renewal of his passport which was issued to him on 19th May, 1964, and which was valid up to 18th August, 1964. He has applied *for* endorsement for countries of the Middle East, Europe (including Turkey) and U.K.

SHRI SANKAR PRATAP SINGH DEV: May I know, Sir, if it is a fact that he is going to settle down in Europe.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: I do not know.

श्री ए० बी० वाजपेयी : क्या यह सच है कि शेख अब्दुल्ला हज की यात्रा पर जाना चाहते हैं और क्या यह भी सच है कि

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Shankar Pratap Singh Dev.

उनके साथ काश्मीर प्लेबिसाइड फ्रंट के कुछ और भी नेता विदेश यात्रा पर जा रहे हैं? अगर यह सच है तो क्या सरकार ने शेख अब्दुल्ला और उनके साथियों से यह आश्वासन प्राप्त किया है कि वे विदेशों में काश्मीर के सवाल पर भारत के खिलाफ जहरीला प्रचार नहीं करेंगे?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: The question relates to the issue of a passport to Sheikh Abdullah. The new application has been received in which he has stated that he wants to go to Haj and also visit his sons in England.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: What about the latter part of my question?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: That does not relate to the question.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: It does. We know of cases in which passports have been refused on the ground that the Government did not think that the person who is going abroad will not carry on objectionable activities. Sir, we all know what Sheikh Abdullah stands for. We all know about his views. May I know, Sir, whether the Government have taken any assurance from Sheikh Abdullah that he will not carry on anti-India propaganda while abroad?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: He applied for the passport. The matter is under consideration.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: Are you satisfied with this reply, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You cannot ask for an assurance.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: But passport has already been given.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: No.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE: He has got the passport. He has asked for endorsement.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: The passport was valid only up to the 18th August, 1964. Now he has applied for a fresh passport.

SHRI A. B. VAJPAYEE* In reply, to a question the hon. Foreign Minister replied in the other House that Sheikh Abdullah has reserved five seats in a particular ship going to Haj. Are we to understand that Sheikh Abdullah has made the reservation without being assured by the Government that it will give a passport.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: That is quite possible. He might have reserved in advance.

(Many hon. Members stood up)

MR.

CHAIRMAN-. I cannot just allow five persons at a time.

SHRI A. D. MANI: May I ask the Minister what reasons Sheikh Abdullah has given for his proposed trip to Europe? I can understand Haj. And, further, may I know whether he has asked for any special foreign exchange for this?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: I have already stated the reason given in the passport application. First is Haj pilgrimage and the second is to visit his sons in London.

SHRI A. D. MANI: Why?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: Because his sons are in London.

(Some hon. Members stood up)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Everybody will get a chance up to a limit.

SHRI ARJUN ARORA: May I know, Sir, if the normal procedure adopted for the Haj pilgrims has been adopted in the case of Sheikh Abdullah, or has he been given a special treatment? The normal procedure is that intend-

ing Haj pilgrims apply, and as there are a large number of applicants, lotteries are drawn, and only in those cases where the applicants draw a lot in their favour they are allowed to go for Haj.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: Sir, Sheikh Abdullah has approached the Port Haj Committee, Bombay, through the trading agent of the Government of Jammu and Kashmir for the reservation of five seats. Kashmir has got a quota of pilgrims and he will be included in that quota.

SHRI P. N. SAPRU: May I know, Sir, if it is a fact that we are a democratic State and that it will be contrary to the principles of a democratic State to deny to a citizen of the country the right to visit a place of pilgrimage even on political grounds?

MR. CHAIRMAN: It need not be replied.

SHRI SYED AHMAD: Sir, in view of the question put by Mr. Vajpayee I want the Minister for External Affairs to make it clear that a passport in the sense in which an international Passport is issued is not generally issued to pilgrims going on Haj and that only Haj permits are issued and not passports at all.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: I have stated that he is not only going to Haj but he is also visiting other countries including the United Kingdom.

SHRI OM MEHTA: May I know whether it is not a fact that in a recent statement Sheikh Abdullah has said that he would be visiting Middle East countries and Western countries where he would canvass for his stand against Kashmir's accession to India? He has made anti-Indian statement at the Soper Convention and he said that he would canvass for that speech when he visits foreign countries.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You want to know whether he has said that in his application?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: I have already said what he said in the application. All these things will be taken into consideration before a passport is given.

SHRI ABID ALI: In view of the undesirable and anti-national activities of Sheikh Abdullah, will the Government take this opportunity, as he has submitted his passport for renewal, to impound it?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: It is a suggestion for action.

SARDAR SW ARAN SINGH: It is not our intention to impound the passport.

श्री विमलकुमार मल्लालजी चौरङ्गिया :
क्या श्रीमान यह बतलाने का कष्ट करेंगे कि पूर्व में जो उनको पासपोर्ट दिया गया था और जिन जिन देशों में खास तौर पर पाकिस्तान में उनकी एक्टिविटीज के बारे में इस बात का ध्यान रखा गया कि नहीं कि वहाँ पर भारत विरोधी प्रचार किया ? क्या इस बारे में सरकार को जानकारी है अथवा नहीं ?

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: The Government issues passports to visit outside countries without taking into consideration all these factors. If they are satisfied that the reasons given in the application are satisfactory, then passports are issued and many Members to whom passports have been issued have gone abroad and have vilified the Government and made anti-Indian speeches but we do not take those into consideration at all because Opposition Members have gone out of this country and have made violent propaganda against us, bringing discredit to the Government.

Shri ARJUN ARORA: Sham*.

SHRIMATI LAKSHMI N. MENON: Why not the Members then stand up and say that the passports should not be given?

SHRI LOKANATH MISRA: Sir, an allegation has been made . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: No. Next question.

*562. [The questioner (Shri Surjit Singh Atwal) was absent. For answer, vide col. 4747 infra.]

♦734. [The questioner (Shri D. Thengiri) was absent. For answer* vide cols. 4747-48. infra.]

Haj

*735. SHRI ABID ALI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have permitted about 17,500 persons to proceed for Haj this year against about 45,000 applications received from the intending Haj pilgrim; and

(b) whether Government have received representations requesting this increase in the number of persons who are permitted for Haj and if so, what action has been taken thereon?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DINESH SINGH): (a) and (b) It has been decided to permit 17,500 persons to proceed on Haj pilgrimage during 1965. About 32,000 applications are estimated to have been received by the Mogul Line Limited, and some representations were received for increase in the quota, but it was not possible to agree owing to the difficult foreign exchange position.

SHRI ABID ALI: What was the number of persons who could not go last year because of this restriction and is it not a fact that a large number has been added to the present number of applications and now Gov-