

(MR. CHAIRMAN *in the Chair*)

### ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question No. 241. ...(*Interruptions*)... Question Hour, please. ...(*Interruptions*)... Let the question be answered. ...(*Interruptions*)... Question No. 241. ...(*Interruptions*)...

#### **Corruption in Railways**

\*241. SHRI C. P. NARAYANAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that corruption has corroded Railways at all levels during the last three years;

(b) the number of officials at top echelons of Railways who have faced charges of corruption and nepotism during the period and how many of them were punished or are undergoing trial;

(c) the estimated loss to Railways due to corruption during these years; and

(d) whether any corrective measures have been taken by Government to make a systemic correction?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

#### ***Statement***

(a) No, Sir.

(b) The number of officers on whom punishments were imposed departmentally as a result of Vigilance proceedings were 251 in 2012, 168 in 2013 and 231 in 2014. Out of these, officers of Joint Secretary and above level were 15, 8 and 7 respectively. Similarly, sanctions were given to CBI for prosecution of 15, 16 and 13 officers respectively in 2012, 2013 and 2014. Out of these, officers of Joint Secretary and above level were 3, 2 and 1 respectively.

(c) The exact loss to the Railways due to corruption cannot be quantified.

(d) Railways have well established systems, rules and procedures which guide its various functions. Taking corrective measures, as and when required, is a continuous process. The Railways also have a vigilance organization, spread over the entire railway system which conducts preventive, decoy and surprise checks. It also investigates

complaints of corruption received. If any irregularity is detected, suitable disciplinary action is taken, depending upon the gravity of the charges and in consultation with the Central Vigilance Commission, in cases involving Group 'A' officers.

Corrective measures for system improvement and increasing transparency are taken regularly. Some of the recent initiatives include putting details of all tenders on website, Stores procurement through e-tendering and reverse auctions, changes in Tatkal reservation processes, introduction of in-motion weighbridges, registering of indents through Freight Operations Information System (FOIS), on-line allotment of rakes etc. A 24 hour helpline (Telephone No.155210) is available for registering complaints. Regular training and seminars are also organized to educate the officials and enhance their knowledge and awareness.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Supplementaries please. *...(Interruptions)...* Silence, hon. Members. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Shall I put my question, Sir? *...(Interruptions)...* Shall I put my question? *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: Sir, I have seen the answers given by the hon. Minister. *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Silence, please. *...(Interruptions)...*

AN HON. MEMBER: The House is not in order, Sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Hon. Members, please sit down. *...(Interruptions)...*

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: The CVC has mentioned that the maximum number of complaints of corruption, in 2013, pertained to the Railways. We find that in that year there were 11,243 complaints. In the Railways, the corruption is at various levels, right from the Railway Board Members to the lower officials, in awarding contracts, in awarding works *...(Interruptions)...*

MR. CHAIRMAN: Question, please.

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: I am coming to the question, Sir. There is corruption not only in catering, but also in ticket reservation. My question is this. Is the Government taking steps to see that the corruption in the Railways is contained?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, I agree with the hon. Member that there have been instances of allegations, complaints and grievances expressed by various affected people about the corrupt practices at various levels.

In fact, it is also true that one of the Members of the Board was also accused

of that, and he is under suspension. There have been other instances as well at various levels and, therefore, I fully agree with him; and I also agree that we need to take corrective steps. I will mention a few of them which I have already taken.

Number one, in award of contracts, personally, as a Minister, all my powers have been delegated to the General Managers. At the level of General Managers, we are trying to put in place a system whereby there could be a complete transparency. We are trying to introduce the e-tendering system at almost all levels. We are also trying to find out how the appointments are done because that was also a subject matter of corruption. We appointed Chairman, Members of the Railway Board, General Managers and DRMs with almost utmost transparency as far as possible, and you must have noticed that as a result of what we have done in the last few weeks, there have not been a single instance in which people have alleged any wrongdoing on that part. So, we need to change the system. We should also take absolutely stringent action. To prevent such practices being repeated, we also requested Mr. Vinod Rai who was the Comptroller and Auditor General of India, whose integrity is impeccable, to help us. He has become an Advisor to me in the Railways, and I am trying to use his knowledge as well to make it happen. So, I will assure the Member that we are trying to take as many steps as possible in as many areas as desirable to make sure that the corruption is weeded out over a period of time.

SHRI C.P. NARAYANAN: My second question is this. To prevent corruption at the lower levels, we have to see to it that – as the Minister has rightly mentioned that it will be an open Board and he will be very clear – there is timely-handling of issues at various levels whether it is transfer, appointments and various things. My question is: Will you introduce a system at various levels to see that there is no chance of corruption?

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, this is absolutely right. Corruption could take place because of two reasons. One is, the system itself is completely susceptible to corruption or the people who operate the system are having corruption in their mind. So, we have to act at both levels. As I mentioned, we are trying to make as many systematic changes as possible. At the lowest level that you mentioned, Sir, we have introduced a portal which I had announced in the Budget on 26th of February. On following Monday, within three days, we have actually put that portal in place, which is a customer redressal complaint where -- it is for the first time -- you could also post a picture taken. For example, if you see somebody demanding hundred rupees from you in the train, you could use your mobile as a weapon, take the picture and load it on our complaint portal. We will follow it up. You can see the tracking of that complaint on an ongoing basis and then we will be able to know that. But I fully agree with you. There are thirteen lakh employees

working in Railways. There are various levels at which commercial transaction takes place. We have to keep a vigilant watch to make sure that all corrupt practices are stopped. We must bring in as much transparency as desirable and necessary which we are committed to do. I will assure the Members that we will all work together to weed out corruption from Railways.

SHRI TARUN VIJAY: Sir, I congratulate the hon. Minister for bringing systemic changes in the entire mechanism. But I would like to inform the hon. Minister that there have been very serious instances of corruption and many officers were arrested and a Railway Minister had to resign. What are the cases and the details about the action taken against those corrupt officers? There have also been instances that even one hour or two hours before the departure of the train, you get the tickets from New Delhi Station, Old Delhi Station and some other stations. These are the things that irritate and give a lot of hassles to the genuine passengers. So, I would like to have the information about the action taken against the corrupt officials and the changes that you are bringing to stop such incidents in future.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, the details of the action taken is already mentioned in the body. But I will repeat it, if you want, in respect of 2014 only. The number of complaints investigated was 2,735, the preventive checks conducted during the same period for the same reason that you mentioned was 21,566. The officials punished includes Group A – 7, Group A, below JS level – 76, Group B- 148, Group C&D – 7,000 and the total number of such cases where the action has been taken is 7,231.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU : Sir, I wish to make just one more point. He has made a very important point, saying that there are instances where there has been hoodwinking of the system by touts who fleece people when they book their tickets. It is an ongoing process. In fact, recently, about three-four days ago, we discovered that there was a system being operated by some vested interests whereby they could book the tickets within a fraction of a second. We have taken preventive action there and hopefully, we would continue doing this. There is always somebody who wants to hoodwink the system. He is probably a step ahead of us. We need to be two steps ahead of him to prevent it. It is an ongoing exercise and we shall continue to do it.

**श्री रवि प्रकाश वर्मा :** थैंक्यू सर, आपने मुझे बोलने का मौका दिया। सर, रेलवे बहुत बड़ा आर्गनाइजेशन है। सच्चाई तो यह है कि रेलवे को घाटा खाली भ्रष्टाचार के कारण ही हो रहा है। माननीय मंत्री जी ने जवाब में बताया है कि रेलवे में सतर्कता संगठन है जो समूचे रेल विभाग में

फैला हुआ है। सच्चाई तो यह है कि भ्रष्टाचारियों का भी एक पैरेलल तंत्र है, जो पूरे रेलवे के अंदर फैला हुआ है। महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से मंत्री जी को बतलाना चाहता हूँ कि Railway Track Components Manufacturers Association ने मुझे एक प्रतिवेदन दिया था, जो मैंने मंत्री जी को दिया है। वे बतलाते हैं कि किस तरह से सिस्टम के अंदर rigging करके यह जो पटरी में लगाने वाले सिप्रंग होते हैं, इसमें बहुत बड़ा भ्रष्टाचार किया जा रहा है और इन्हीं कारणों से बड़ी-बड़ी दुर्घटनाएं घट रही हैं। आज भी एक बड़ी दुर्घटना रायबरेली के पास घटी है।

**श्री सभापति :** प्रश्न पूछिए।

**श्री रवि प्रकाश वर्मा :** महोदय, मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से पूछना चाहता हूँ कि रेलवे के अंदर भ्रष्टाचार का यह जो एक बहुत बड़ा तंत्र फैला हुआ है, इसको दुरुस्त करने के लिए आपके पास क्या इंतजाम हैं?

**श्री सुरेश प्रभु :** मैंने सदन को अवगत कराया कि कौन-कौन से अलग-अलग कदम उठाए जा रहे हैं, जिसके कारण इस व्यवस्था में सुधार ला सकें। साथ-साथ मैंने सम्मानित सदस्य को यह भी बताया कि कितने ऐसे इंस्टेंसेज हैं जहां पर स्ट्रिक्ट एक्शन लिया गया है। तो दोनों चीजें साथ-साथ में करनी होंगी। आपके पास अगर ऐसे सुझाव भी हों तो दीजिए, आपके पास कोई भी इंस्टेंसेज होंगे तो बताइए जहां एक्शन लेने की जरूरत है। मैं आपको बिल्कुल आश्वासित करना चाहता हूँ कि उसके खिलाफ हम एक्शन तुरन्त ले लेंगे।

SHRI BHUPINDER SINGH: Sir, the main question talks about corruption and nepotism at (d). We have been discussing corruption. I would like to put a straight question to the hon. Minister on nepotism. When foodgrains and fertilizers are being transported through rakes, it is purposely delayed for weeks; it is kept aside. The goods trains carry minor minerals and other things. I have reported this, time and again, that there is some nepotism shown where rakes carrying fertilizers are concerned, for which there is a black market. Where a rake is supposed to reach a place within 24 hours, it takes seven days; it is kept aside for seven days. I would like to know whether the Ministry would take stringent action against those who are involved in such nepotism and favouritism, especially in the case of minerals, and other produce.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: Sir, the Railways is a transporter. It is an agent of the person or institution that wants to dispatch certain things through the Railways, as per the dispatch order. If the dispatcher wants to deliver certain goods at a particular place, we strictly go by that order. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please don't comment. Let him finish.

SHRI SURESH PRABHU: In this case that you have mentioned, the Ministry of Fertilizers, under the fertilizer dispatch rules, is authorized to say where the fertilizers should go and where they should not go. Therefore, we strictly follow that order. Of course, there is a challenge before all of us to find ways to deal with this very big

problem. Now, there is always a peak demand. During the sowing season, whether it is Kharif or Rabi, there is a big demand for fertilizers, particularly Urea. What has happened, which has changed the complexion of it, is that we are importing a significant quantity of Urea. That is because the domestic demand for Urea is not so much that we could satisfy the demand through domestic supply. As a consequence of this, there are some challenges, but we work very closely with the Ministry of Fertilizers and try to address this problem.

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI ANANTH KUMAR): Sir, I would like to congratulate the hon. Minister of Railways. This time, the cooperation from Railways has been fantastic. I want to thank him for that.

### रेलगाड़ियों में खान-पान सेवाओं में सुधार लाया जाना

\*242. श्री लाल सिंह वडोदिया: क्या रेल मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार लंबी दूरी की रेलगाड़ियों में खान-पान सेवाओं में और अधिक सुधार करने का विचार रखती है;

(ख) क्या सरकार एक ही प्रकार की व्यंजन सूची के खाद्य पदार्थ परोसने की बजाय विभिन्न प्रकार के व्यंजन परोसे जाने के संबंध में कोई ठोस कार्रवाई करने का विचार रखती है; और

(ग) यदि हां, तो कब तक और यदि नहीं, तो इसके क्या कारण हैं?

रेल मंत्री (श्री सुरेश प्रभु) : (क) से (ग) एक विवरण सभा पटल पर रख दिया गया है।

### विवरण

(क) जी हां। रेलवे में खान-पान सेवाओं की गुणवत्ता और स्वच्छता को मॉनीटर करने के लिए विस्तृत संस्थागत तंत्र है जिसके जरिए नियमित, औचक और आवधिक निरीक्षण किए जाते हैं। यात्रियों को दिए जाने वाले भोजन में बेहतर गुणवत्ता सुनिश्चित करने के लिए उठाए गए/उठाए जाने वाले कदमों में (i) क्षेत्रीय रेलों के पैनल वाले एनएबीसीबी (प्रमाणन निकायों के लिए राष्ट्रीय प्रत्यायन बोर्ड) द्वारा मान्यता प्रदान किए गए स्वतंत्र और प्रतिष्ठित लेखा परीक्षा एजेंसियों से आवधिक अन्तरालों पर खानपान सेवाओं का थर्ड पार्टी आडिट करवाना, लेखा परीक्षा के मापदण्डों में खानपान सेवाओं के सभी पहलुओं जैसे व्यक्तिगत स्वच्छता, अवसरचना सुविधाएं, साफ-सफाई और स्वच्छता, भोजन की सुरक्षा, भण्डार सुविधाएं, विनियामक, सांविधिक और संरक्षा संबंधी विनियमों का कार्यान्वयन, प्रस्तुति की गुणवत्ता आदि शामिल हैं, (ii) ई-खानपान की शुरुआत करना ताकि यात्री इंटरनेट के माध्यम से अपनी पसंद के भोजन की बुकिंग कर सकें, (iii) केंद्रीकृत खानपान सेवा निगरानी सेल (सीएसएमसी) की स्थापना करना, जिसको यात्री टोल फ्री नं. 1800-111-321 पर खानपान कार्यकलापों से संबंधित शिकायतों के तत्काल निवारण के लिए वास्तविक समय पर सहायता प्राप्त करने के लिए शिकायत कर सकते हैं, (iv) सेवाओं में कमियों के मामले में भारी जुर्माने लगाने सहित कठोर दण्डात्मक कार्रवाई करना, (v) भोजन की गुणवत्ता, स्वच्छता में सुधार लाने और यात्रियों को विविध प्रकार का भोजन प्रदान करने के लिए प्रतिष्ठित ब्रांडों के पहले से तैयार भोजन (रेडी टू ईट मीलस) की शुरुआत करना, शामिल है।